BUSINESS/BI

Japan firm plans P5-B coco facility in RP; 600.000-ha needed

■ METRO / A23

74-year-old woman caught with P5M worth of suspected **Ecstasy tablets at Naia**

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph



NEWS/A3

Cops harass legit STL operators, complains PCSO

WORLD / A26

Bush orders National Guard to US-Mexico border to stop flow of illegal immigrants

'Da Vinci Code' for adults only, says film review body

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

LEONARDO DA VINCI HIMSELF WOULD'VE BEEN

A three-member committee of the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRC8) gave an R-18 rating to the controversial Hollywood film "The Da Vinci Code," which

DA YINCI/ AZI

Wednesday, May 17, 2006

B sections / Vol. 21 / No. 158

No environmental clearance for ecopark, lawmaker says

By Philip C. Tubeza

LOOK WHO'S TALKING. Trying to turn the tables on critics of the controversial housing project at the La Mesa watershed area, Albay Rep. Edcel Lagman yesterday ac-

NO ENVIRONMENTAL/AZI



2 new slays for task force

Journalist shot dead in ambush

By Nancy Carvajal Metro

REPORTER ALBERT ORSOLINO often travelled with a companion. Yesterday, driving his Toyota Corolla on his way to work, he was alone. That was when the gunmen struck.

The 45-year-old reporter for the tabloid Saksi, who covered Malacañang, became the latest in the growing list of journalists murdered since 1986 when two men on a motorcycle shot and killed him near a gas station along C-4 Road in Kaunlaran Village, Caloocan City.

JOURNALIST/A8

RP joins 1st ever int'l tsunami drill

STO. DOMINGO, ALBAY-ALthough the Philippines escaped the deadly 2004 tsunami that ravaged its neighbors, the country should brace for killer waves because it lies in a geologically dangerous region and has a recent history of tsunami devastation, officials said yesterday.

The Philippines is among more than two dozen countries joining an unprecedented drill on Wednesday to test a tsunami warning system in the Pacific Ocean. A Pacific warning system has been in place since 1965, but a full ocean-wide exercise has never taken place.

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC MAP INGFOGRAPHIC, ERNIE SAMBO



YET ANOTHER JOURNALIST WRITES 30: Alissa Orsolino, wife of tabloid photojournalist Albert Orsolino, is consoled by a friend after viewing the remains of her husband who was ambushed near the boundary of Malabon and Caloocan by two men on Tuesday morning.

Senate, House OK dialogue on Cha-cha

By Juliet Labog-Javellana and Christine O. Avendano

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARroyo yesterday warned lawmakers she would press ahead with Charter change even if it invited controversy. She persuaded the two chambers of Congress to hold a dialogue on her moves to adopt the parliamentary system.

Sen. Richard Gordon, chair of the Senate committee on constirutional amendments, and his House of Representatives counterpart, Rep. Constantino Ja-

2003. In that year, 264, the biggest number, made it to the top.

Of these, 16 occurred in 1996. According to National Geo-

members of an ethnic group living in a mountainous region

graphic, about a third of the total fatafities were Sherpas.

porters or guides for mountaineering expeditions in the

Himalayas. They are known for physical endurance in

high-ahltude conditions."

of Nepal, "Sherpa" etso refers to locals employed as

the Philippines, India, Malaysia, Korea and Singapore.

■ At least 48 teams—18 on the North route and at least 13 on the South

approach—are making the attempt this year. A number are Asten—from

CONTRACTOR OF THE PROPERTY OF

The recorded number of deaths on Everest is 186 as of 2004

discussions on the President's move to amend the 1987 Consti-

The agreement to hold a dialogue was reached during the Legislative-Executive Develop-Committee Advisory (Ledac) that Ms Arroyo convened yesterday to discuss pending priority measures with nine session days left before Congress ad-

journs sine die next month. Ms Arroyo set the tone of the Ledac meeting attended by Senate President Franklin Drilon,

first time after he broke away from the President in July last year and called for her resignation over allegations she stole the

2004 presidential election. The time is now and I must press this even if it invites controversy because I am aware that we are a gathering of statespersons despite our disagreements," Ms Arroyo said in remarks to open the meeting. "We can only mold consensus from challenge and in

the marketplace of ideas." The administration is pressing

The common problems encountered by climbers are avalanches,

hurricanes, falling rocks, prevesse talls, whiteout (low visibility), lost

tents, severe extraustion, dehydration, trostbite, hypothermia and pneu-

High altitudes pose dangers like snow blindness (common

among climbers not wearing sunglasses) and acute moun-

teen sickness (dizziness, vomiting, loss of balance, per-

sistent coughing and sleepiness). Fluid may also col-

pulmonary edema, and quick death.

raula, were tasked with opening who went to Malacañang for the ahead with Charter change on

it has initiated a signature campaign under the "people's initiative" mode of amending the Constitution, posing a single question on whether Filipinos agree to do away with the Senate, adopt a unicameral legislature and approve unspecified transitory provisions that will pave the way for the adoption of the par-

liamentary system. Without an enabling law to support the people's initiative SENATE/AZI

5th activist leader killed in a week's time

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

SAN NICOLAS, PANgasinan-Again, the assassins were on a motorcycle. Again, there was no escaping their deadly fire.

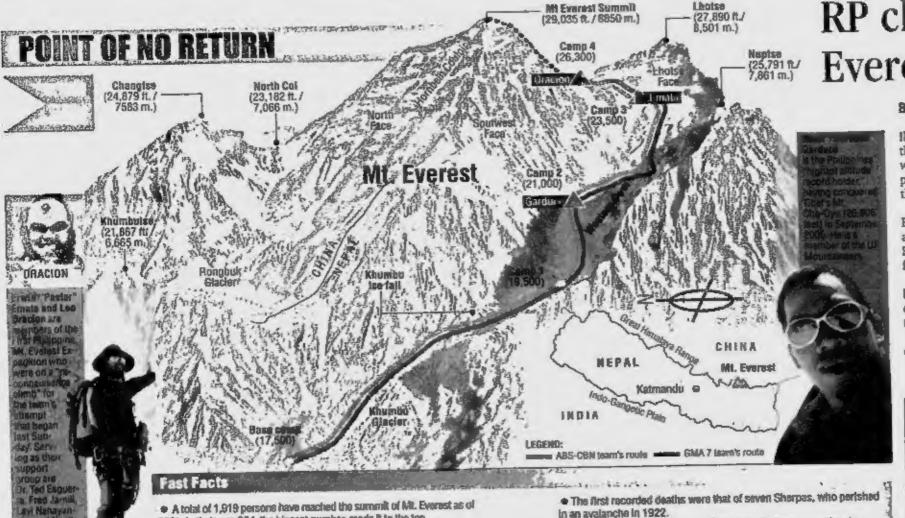
At 10:30 a.m. yesterday, peasant leader Jose Doton, 62, and his brother Cancio, 57, were on a motorcycle on their way home when two other men riding tandem on a red Honda motorcycle fired at them at close range.

Doron, secretary general of the leftist Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, died from bullet wounds in the head and chest-the 124th militant leader assassinated under the Arroyo presidency and the fifth activist murdered this

His brother, who was driving the motorcycle, took two bullets condition.

The attack occurred a day after the Philippine National Police Task Force Usig vowed to solve the wave of killings of leftwing militants and journalists around

Some 170 km south of where the Dotons were ambushed and at roughly the same time, two other gusmen were on a similarly deadly mission. Also riding on a motorcycle, they shot and killed



RP climbers near **Everest summit**

By Alcuin Papa

IF THE "MOUNTAIN GODS" ALLOW IT AND the weather cooperates, the Philippine flag will be planted today or tomorrow on the peak of Mt. Everest, the tallest mountain in

Two members of the First Philippine Mt. Everest Expedition (FPMEE), Leo Oracion and Erwin "Pastor" Emata, set out from the Everest Base Camp (5,400 meters or 17,700 feet) last weekend.

Hopes are high that Oracion or Emate may be able to reach the summit in the next two days, PPMEE team leader Regie Pablo told the Inquirer yesterday.

Another climber, Romi Garduce, has also embarked on his own quest to get to the peak

RP CLIMBERS/ A10

Lea's daughter born in RP

By Bayani San Diego jr. Entertainment

SINGER-ACTRESS LEA SALONGA, THE Tony-winning star of "Miss Saigon," gave birth to a girt at noon yester-

day three days before her due date. Les, who turned 35 in Pebruary, made certain that she would give birth in the Philippines. But the family requested the LEA'S/ A21

the state of the s

lect in the brain and/or lungs, causing cerebral and

Cloudy with Rains

Partly Cloudy Partly Cloudy Bon. Santas

Junk raps, Batasan 5 ask court

By Tarra V. Quismundo

THE "BATASAN 5" YESTERDAY ASKED A Makati court to dismiss the rebellion charges the Department of Justice (DOJ) filed against them last week, saying they were a revision of the same charges a judge threw out earlier.

ur Ocampo, Teodoro Casiño and Joel Virador of Bayan Muna, Rafael Mariano of Anakpawis Juan as it hypothesized a leftistand Liza Maza of Gabriela asked Judge Reinato Quilala of Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 57 to dismiss the new charges filed against them and 41 others last Friday.

"[It is] fatally infirm because it is a rehash or a substantive restatement of the amended information that was earlier rejected by Branch 137 as violative, among other reasons, of the due process rights of the accused," said the motion filed by the lawmakers' counsel, Romeo Capu-

'Insufficient evidence'

The five said the prosecution's 'evidence was "either utterly lacking or insufficient to establish probable cause."

The latest rebellion charges were filed one week after Judge Jenny Lind Aldecoa-Delorino of Makati RTC Branch 137 refused to include the five and 41 others in the rebellion case filed by the DOJ against Anakpawis Rep. Crispin Beltran and 1st Lt. Lawrence San Juan in connection with the attempted coup on Feb.

Delorino had ruled the DOJ's

Party-list Representatives Sat- amended information to include the 46 could not supplant the case against Beltran and San rightist conspiracy to topple the

government going all the way

back to 1968, when the Commu-

nist Party of the Philippines was

New charges

The DOJ then filed new charges against the 46. Like the case against Beltran and San Juan, the charges alleged a conspiracy between rebel soldiers and communist forces, using the Batasan 5 as legal fronts, to stage a series of uprisings against the government beginning on Feb. 24 and culminating on May 1.

In their motion, the lawmakers also cited the DOJ's breach of court procedures, saying the prosecutors failed to personally certify its many witnesses, contrary to law.

On its face, the information suffers fatal defects and should be dismissed outright for failare to comply with the mandatory requirements of [the rules on criminal procedure]... On its face the information is null and void for failure to comply with the rules," the Batasan 5 MAGDALO TRIAL

Another witness links Gringo, but...

By Tarra V. Quismundo

A NAVY LIEUTENANT TESTIfied yesterday that former Sen. Gregorio 'Gringo' Honasan spoke to restive junior officers in at least two meetings leading up to the failed Oakwood mutiny in 2003 but said there was no discussion of violence on how to implement the former military-rebel-turned-senator's "National Recovery Pro-

Lt. Nerelito Martinez, a helicopter pilot and flight instructor based in Sangley Point, Cavite, said he was invited to the meetings some time in February and March 2003 by Navy Lt. Manuel Cabochan, one of the defendants, who said Honasan would discuss his action plan to address such problems as slow economy, poverty, peace and order, high population growth and corrup-

But unlike two earlier witnesses who said violence was part of the plan to topple the government which Honasan discussed with the junior officers in a subsequent meeting June, Martinez said Honasan ruled out the use of

meetings he attended.

"He asked the attendees if we have read the program and if we have any comment about it. So we asked if it would involve violence. He said there is no violence involved, and that this is only a program [offering] alternative solutions to our problems which can be implemented in 5, 10, 50, or even 100 years," said Martinez.

"I was comforted by his reply, because he told the attendees that there would be no violence," Martinez added. "He even joked, 1 can't engage in another coup detat or my wife will surely kill me'.... The attendees all laughed."

Martinez was the 18th witness presented by the prosecution at the Makati trial of 31 junior military officers accused of coup d'etat for their involvement in the short-lived July 27 Oakwood mutiny in Makati.

His testimony contrasted with those of Marine Capt. Pedrito Dulanas and Army Capt. Manuel Darius Resuello who told the court earlier that the use of violence in toppling the government was discussed during a June 4, 2003 meeting between Honasan and junior officers.

The prosecution said the ap-

monies showed how Honasan and the other alleged mutiny; leaders used deceit in their recruitment as proved by the change in tenor at the meeting attended by Dulanas and Resuello three months later.

But the defense had a different take, saying Martinez's statements were in its favor.

"The witness just told the! truth," defense lawyer Theodore Te Roel told reporters. "Therewas no talk of violence, of a takeover. We should accept the witness' statement at face value. I think the prosecution added it's. own conclusion on what their. witness had said."

Martinez said he was conducting aerial reconnaisance photography over Caticlan in Aklan at the time of the failed mutiny. After the takeover, he was detained by the military for two weeks as his name appeared on files stored in diskettes found in Oakwood after the mutiny. Fadulion said the files contained a list of recruits for the takeover.

Honasan and six others were named as defendants in the same case last February all but one of them are at large and

Juan arrives at the Makati City parent discrepancy in the testi- have not been arraigned. violence during the two Shun DOJ advice, sychophants, GMA told

SAYING PRESIDENT MARAPAGALARROYO needed independent-minded legal advisers man yesterday urged Malacañang not to rely too much on the Department of Justice which had taken the "path of legal extremism and political rigidity."

HANDCUFFED, Lt. Lawrence San

the rebellion charges against the "Batasan 5"

should be dropped since they were straining the already tense relations between Congress and the Palace.

"These are vintage charges and reminiscent of not sycophants, an administration congress. Marcosian thinking, said Cuenco in a statement, referring to the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

"I cannot understand at all the DOJ's relentless pursuit of the Barasan 5. Would its actions foster unity in government? Would the same Cebu Rep. Antonio Cuenco, chair of the engender solidarity and improvement in gov-House committee on foreign affairs, also said ernance? I see not even an iota of gain or benefit from this legal adventurism," he said.

The Batasan 5-five leftist members of Congress who escaped arrest after a court refused to charge them with rebellion-have been charged anew by the DOJ in connection with the aborted coup against the administration last Feb. 24. Cuenco said the House will "always be expect-

ed to grant its protective shield to the embattled legislators and Speaker [Jose] de Venecia could always be prodded to play Big Brother."

De Venecia had given the Batasan 5 sanctuary in the House until a Makati court ruled

against including them in the rebellion case the government had filed against another party-list member of Congress, Rep. Crispin Beltran, and rebel soldier 1st Ld.

Lawrence San Juan. "(Pursuing the case would add) undue strain to the already tense relations between the legislature and the executive branch," Cuenco said;

Cuenco Malacañang to rely more on Solicitor General Antonio Nachura and legal luminuries in the House instead of the DOJ saying this would pre vent "another serious loss in its legal battle and policy advocacle such as what hap pened in the cases of EO 464, Proclamation 1017 and (the calibrated preemptive is sponse policy against street protests)."

The Suprem Court recently ruled against the Palace of several provisions of Executive Order No. 464, which barred government officials from attending con gressional inquiries Presidential Procla mation No. 1017 which placed the country under a state of emergency, and the CPR, which banned street protests.

"Malacañang bad ly needs men and women with legal ex pertise who can bold ly tell the President that a legal stang point is wrong and who can call spade... a spade Cuenco said.

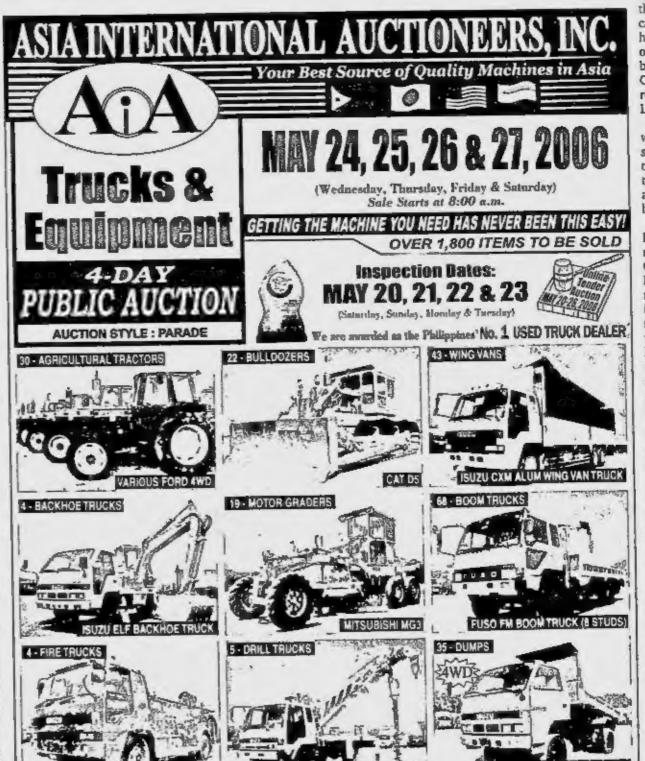
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Cops harassing legit STL operators, PCSO chief complains

-By Norman Bordadora

中心中

110

Sweepstakes Office yesterday said its small town lottery operations are being hampered by policemen protecting illegal "jueteng" operations.

in a news conference that his of-THE PHILIPPINE CHARITY fice has received reports that STL operators are being harassed by police officers protecting jueteng the illegal numbers game.

Valencia didn't name names

PCSO chair Sergio Valencia said but said that the policemen in- ble for the resurgence of volved may be slapped with administrative and criminal charges in Quezon and Bataan.

to discourage legal competition to our police identify several police- operators and their legitimate emmen in partnership with local gambling lords as those responsi- from operating in the provinces.

jueteng," Valencia sald.

Valencia said that the allegedly unscrupulous policemen have re-"Initial reports submitted to sorted to the harassment of STL ployees in a bid to discourage them

The PCSO reported that it has against them," Valencia sald.
ready remitted more than P2 The STL has so far been already remitted more than P2 in the areas where STL has operated since mid-February.

"We will not hesitate to unmask these people and file criminal as well as administrative charges

million to the local police forces launched in seven areas for test runs. These areas include Quezon, Bataan, Angeles City in Pampanga, Quezon City, Occidental Mindore, Pampanga, Laguna and



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Cheero in a statement with the abouted coup agent

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- Patty Betita, Model/Image Consultant

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Gov't starts valuation of Hacienda Luisita

By Blanche S. Rivera

HOW MUCH IS FIACIENDA LUISIta worth?

A government team is to start an ocular inspection of the sugar estate today to determine the value of the hacienda, which the Arroyo administration has decided to parcel out to the farm's workers.

Agrarian Reform Undersecretary Narciso Nieto Jr. estimated that only around 4,600 hectares of the 4,915-ha estate owned by

the family of former President change for quick cash. Corazon Aquino would be distributed to the farm hands after subtracting the area occupied by roads, canals and houses.

Nieto made the announcement of the valuation during meetings with the two groups of Luisita workers who came to the DAR central office yesterday.

This early, the DAR has appealed to the would-be beneficiaries batting for individual land titles not to give up their land in ex-

(landowners) and then later on, come to us for another agrarian reform," Nieto said, addressing members of the Parm Workers' Agrarian Reform Movement-Luisita (FARM).

He said the government was taking great pains to acquire stock scheme in effect in Luisita, the land, which remained un-paving the way for the distribuder the control of the Cojuangcos for 16 years through a workers. The stock scheme had stock distribution option un-

der the Land Reform Law. The "Don't sell them to the rich estate's tenants have been demanding that the hacienda be parceled out to them under the government's land reform program for the past 47 years.

On DAR's recommendation, the Presidential Agrarian Reform Council revoked last year the tion of the sugar land to its farm made the farmers part owners of the estate since 1989.

A team composed of representatives from the Land Bank of the Philippines, the DAR and the Department of Agriculture would visit the 10 barangays that comprise Luisita from May 17-to-19.

The Alyansa ng mga Manggagawang Bukid ng Asyenda Luisita (AMBALA) said the Land Bank should peg the value of Hacienda Luisita to its value in 1989 when the stock distribution scheme was implemented under a law enacted during the administration of President Aquino.

"The land is not free; farmers will pay for it, and they cannot afford to pay so much for the hacienda, which some say can even fetch up to P2 million per hectare," AMBALA legal counsel Jobert Pahilga said.

The Hacienda Luisita Inc., manager of the estate, had sent feelers that it wanted P1 million per hectare as compensation for the hacienda, the same amount for which it sold 77 hectares of the hacienda to the Bases Conversion Development Authority for an expressway.

Nieto had said earlier that sug-

ar lands covered by the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program usually fetch between P100,000 and P300,000 per hectare.

When the Land Bank comes up with its valuation, it will be submitted to the landowner for ap-

"If the landowner rejects the value, then it becomes a question of valuation, not coverage. This will go to the DAR Adjudication Board, but the coverage will proceed despite the case," Nieto

The DAR stands pat on its decision to issue a collective certificate of land ownership to the Luisita farm workers by next month to ensure that the titles would be immediately transferred from the landowner.

"This is a continuing process. We will proceed with awarding individual titles if that is what the majority (of farmers) still want," he said.

FARM members yesterday submitted a petition signed by 1,103 farm workers seeking individual' titles for its members when the collective title is issued.

With Kenneth M. del Rosario



INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

VICTORIAS MILLING COMPANY, INC., Victorias City, Negros Occidental wishes to invite interested bidders/contractors to pre-qualify and to bid for the complete repair of one (1) unit 5KV Manually-operated Transfer Switch (MTS) for the Medium-Voltage Compound Feeder based on the Scope of Work covered by Electrical Operations JR No. 4740B dated April 5, 2006.

Interested bidders must submit the following pre-qualification requirements;

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- VMC Accreditation papers for those who are not yet accredited
- Registered and in good standing with SEC or DTI
- Certificate of Registration with BIR
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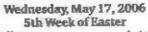
Bidding kits are available at the MCD Office and at Makati Office on May 16 to May 22, 2006, after payment of a non-refundable fee of P500.00. Kindly submit the needed requirements on or before May 24, 2006 to qualify to bid. The pre-bidding conference will be held on May 25, 2006, at the VMC HRD Training Center at 2:30 P.M. The commercial bidding will be announced thereafter.

For further inquiries, please contact Messrs. Carlos S. Quiatchon or Dan C. Labrador at VMC Millsite at telephone numbers (034) 399-3696 to 97 and (local) 2351 or 2309, and Mr. Ernesto "Toto" Oligo at VMC Makati Office at telephone numbers (02)899-0485 and (02)890-7061. Also visit our website www.victoriasmilling.com and e-mail us at mcd@victoriasmilling.com.

Victorias Milling Company, Inc., reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, to waive any required formality therein, and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the Company. The Company assumes no obligation to compensate or indemnify the bidder/s for any expense/s or loss that they may incur in the preparation of the bids, nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

> (Sgd.) TERESITA V. ILAGAN Chairperson, Senior Bidding Committee

THE DAILY GOSPEL



Acts 15:1-6 John 15:1-8 Gospel:

Jesus said to his disciples, "I am the true vine and my Pather is the vinegrower. If any of my branches doesn't bear fruit, he breaks it off; and he prunes every branch that does bear fruit, that it may bear even more fruit.

"You are already made clean by the word I have spoken to you; live in me as I live in you. The branch cannot bear fruit by itself but has to remain part of the vine; so neither can you if you don't remain in me.

"I am the vine and you are the branches. As long as you remain in me and I in you, you bear much fruit; but apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not remain in me is thrown away as they do with branches and they wither. Then they are gathered and thrown into the fire and burned.

"If you remain in me and my words in you, you may ask whatever you want and it will be given to you. My Father is glorified when you bear much fruit: it is then that you become my disciples."

Commentary The issue of becoming Jewish according to the old low carnes up as the preaching to the Gentiles contimes. So Paul and Barnabas return to the church to tell the elders the story of their travels and the conversions, thus bringing joy to all. But they also recount that those who were preaching Judaism as a requisite were causing dissension. The Church decides to convene and look into the matter. Jesus speaks of the vine and the need for pruning and cleaning to increase the yield. It is through living in Jesus that the vine and the branches find their source. Apart from Jesus there is no life, nothing. Concentration on Jesus, not on any other traditions,

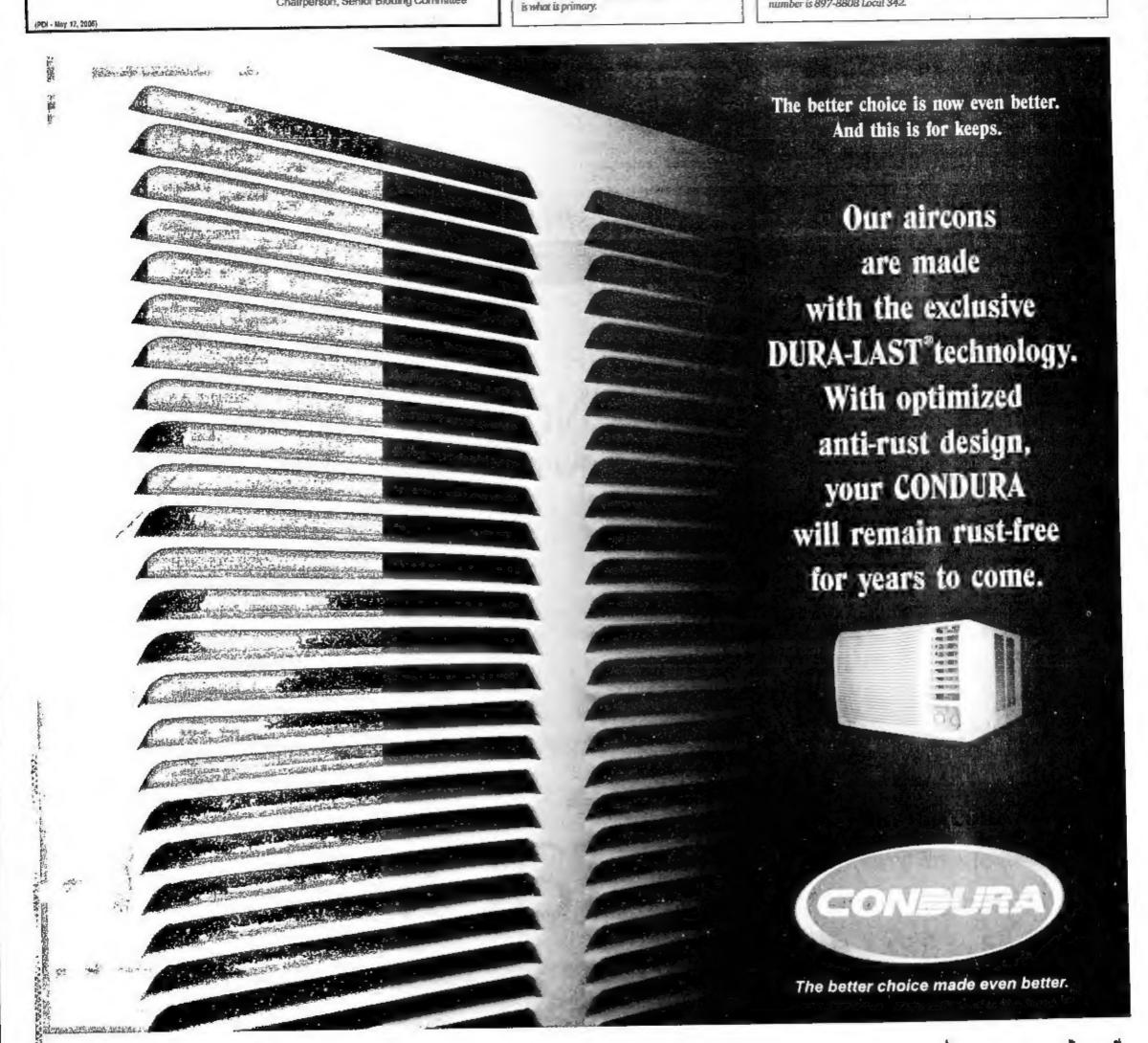
Corrections

IN THE MAY 9 ISSUE, A STORY ON PAGE A2-"IS PALACE PUNishing Karina et al.?"-misstated the name of the government body that oversees the top tiers of the country's bureaucracy. The government body is the Career Executive Service Board (CESB)-not the Career Service Executive Board (CSEB). The same mistake appeared in the May 11 editorial, "Uncivil War."

IN THE MAY 9 ISSUE, A LETTER TO THE EDITOR ON PAGE A12-"Why ethanol first, when we already are overflowing with cocodiesel?"--misstated the motto of Sustainable Rural Enterprise, a nongovernment organization. The NGO's motto is "Always Use Your Coconut!"-not "Always List Your Coconut!"

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makari City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

Complaints about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent to Lorna Kalaw Tirol, readers' advocate, e-mail address: readersadvocate@inquirexcom. ph or fax Nos. 897-47-93/94, Attn: Readers Advocate. Her phone number is 897-8808 Local 342.



Senators see tough battle over budget

By TJ Burgunio

SENATORS, WHO HAD VOWED TO APPROVE the P1.053-trillion proposed budget for 2006 in three weeks, see a fierce debate, perhaps even an impasse, at the bicameral conference because they plan to overhaul the bill passed by the House of Representatives.

"I'm worried that there will be a huge differ-

"I'm worried that there will be a huge difference between what the Senate will pass and what the House has approved. We can't say if there will be an agreement in the bicameral conference," Sen. Manuel Villar Jr. said yesterday.

"Our plan is to set the priorities right in this budget passed by the House. We will prioritize the funds, and there will be major amendments," he added.

Villar, chair of the Senate committee on finance, said that senators intended to scrutinize "lump sum appropriations" in the budget and transfer them to sectors that badly need funds, such as education and health.

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. had said opposition senators planned to closely examine funds he branded as "partisan in nature," including the P5-billion Kilos Asenso Support Fund and the P3-billion Kalayaan Barangay Program Fund. Both are earmarked for local government units.

The funds should be diverted to the Department of Science and Technology, one of the agencies getting the least priority in budget allocation but which could help the government develop technology for tapping alternative sources of energy, he said.

Working overtime

Villar said he had asked the senators to submit their proposed amendments to the House budget measure, saying these would be incorporated in his committee's report to be presented on the floor next week.

"This recommendation will take into consideration all of the opinions and recommendations of the senators," he said.

The Senate expects to pass the measure on May 26 and forthwith hold the bicameral conference with congressmen.

After a caucus Monday afternoon, the senators agreed to work overtime and hold sessions five days a week, instead of the regular three days, to hasten the passage of the budget and six other priority bills.

get and six other priority bills.

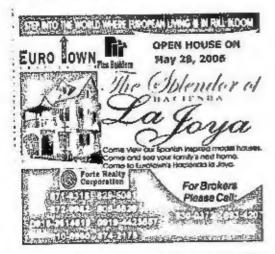
After months of delay, the House approved a P1.04-trillion budget on April 4, a day before Congress took a break for the Holy Week. The budget is normally transmitted to the Senate by mid-November and passed at year's end.

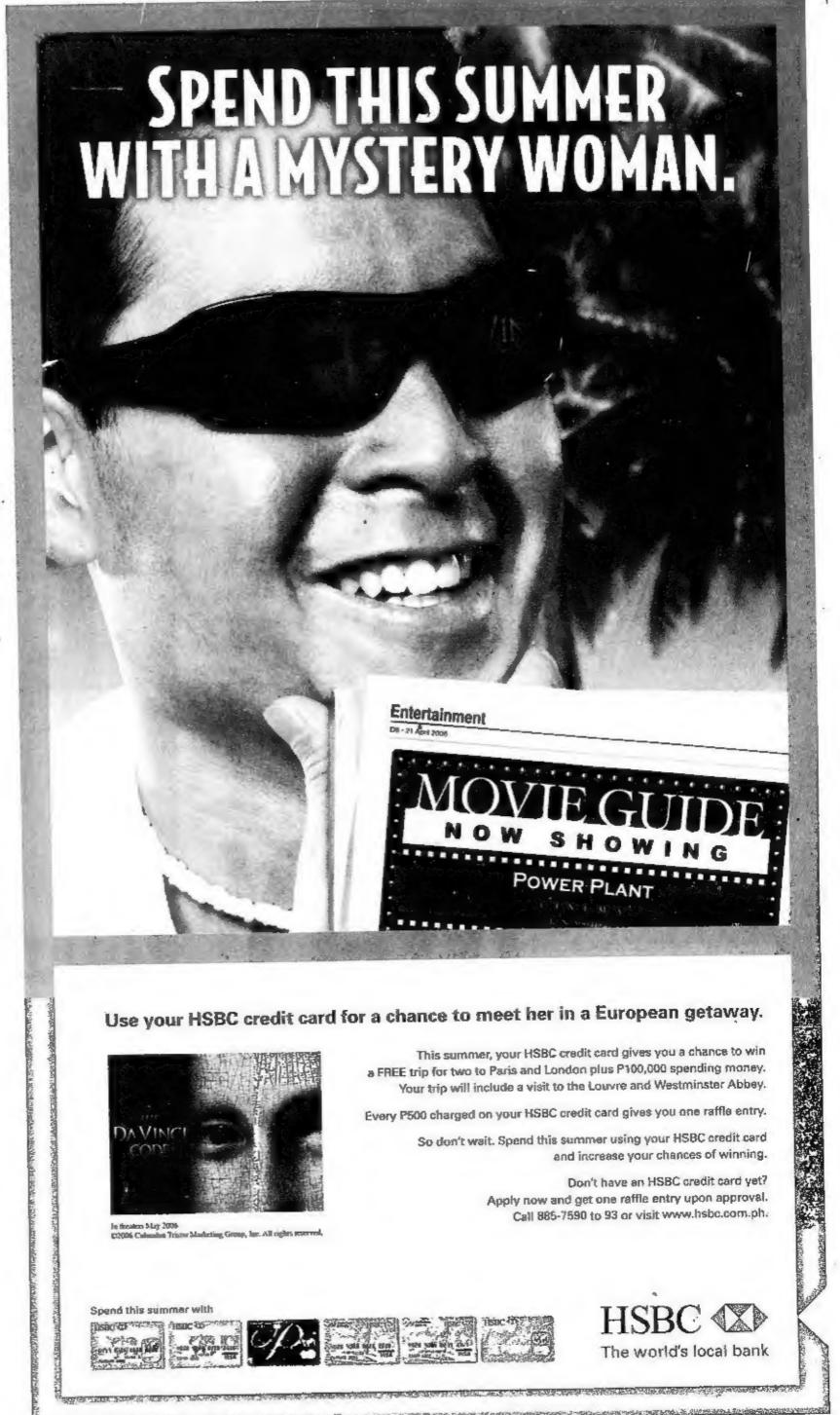
Other than the budget measure, administration Sen. Joker Arroyo doubted the Senate would be able to approve the priority bills during its

marathon sessions until the second week of June.

"It's very ambitious to pass seven bills. I don't know why they overloaded it," he said, pointing out that only three bills could be passed before adjournment. "The budger will occupy most of it (sessions). And most of these bills are contentious in nature."

Apart from the General Appropriations Act, the senators agreed to give priority to the proposal seeking to establish a credit information system, the Electric Power Industry Reform bill, the biofuels program bill, the anti-terror, bill, the automated election bill and the income tax relief bill.





See Ryses for details. Process is tend 31 May 2006, Per DTI-NCR Pernet No 2215, Secret of 2006

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Foes come together for juvenile justice

By Christine O. Avendaño

SETTING ASIDE THEIR DIFFErences for a few minutes, political foes yesterday came together to witness the signing into law of a measure that aims to reform the justice system for juvenile offenders or "children in conflict with the law."

In a simple ceremony in Malacafiang, President Macapagai-Arroyo signed into law the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act of 2006, or Republic Act No. 9344, and said it was a "fitting prelude" to the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council meeting that was to convene immediately after-

"(I)t shows that the executivelegislative working together is as good as ever when it comes to our future generations," said the President in a statement she read at the

Ledac meeting.

Both the signing of the new law and the Ledac meeting were attended by Senate President Franklin Drilon and Senate Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan, former allies of President Arroyo who have become among her staunchest critics, and other members of the Senate, which has collided with Malacañang recently over several issues, primarily the proposal to abolish the chamber on the way to a unicameral-parliamentary from of government.

Following the signing ceremony, Malacañang praised the members of Congress for coming up with the landmark law that would "protect children in conflict with the law from abuse and exploitation."

"The executive branch will extend its fullest support to its implementation as we pursue reforms in

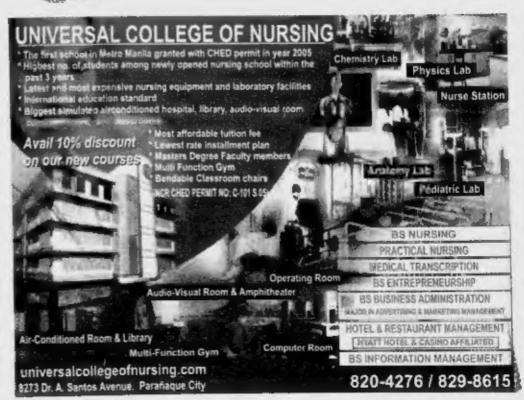
our penal system in cooperation with local government units," said Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye in a statement.

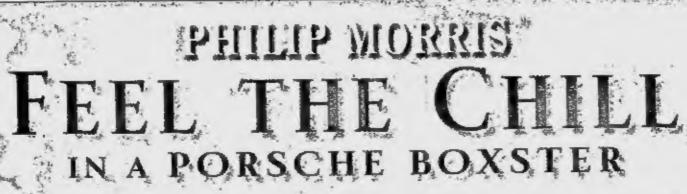
Under the new law, a Juvenile Justice and Welfare System will be created to be supervised by the Department of Justice.

The new body will assist in the review and redrafting of existing policies and regulations and in the formulation of new ones relating to juvenile justice and welfare.

The law requires the development of a comprehensive juvenile intervention program in the local government units from the barangay to the provincial levels.

It also states how the authorities should treat children aged 15 and below when they are taken into custody and the procedures to follow when they are investigated.







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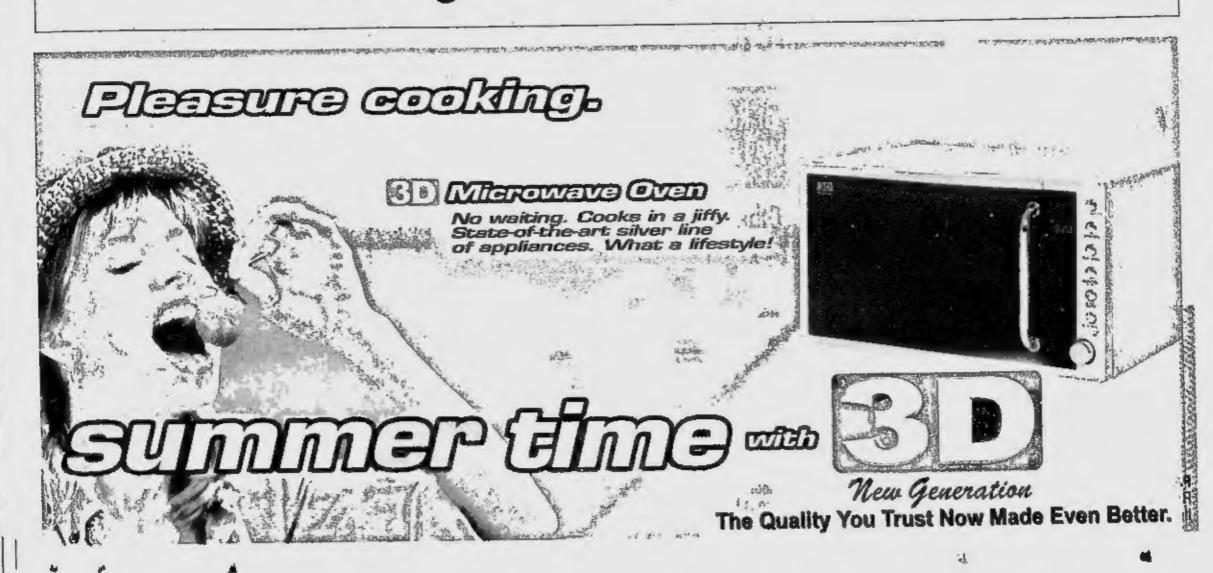
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Journalist shot dead ...

Frum page Al

Orsolino was on his way to the Palace when he was ambushed.

An employee of the Social Security System, identified as Annie Clemente, was wounded when she was hit by a stray bullet in the right leg, said PO2 Pete Rios.

Clemente was seated at her desk inside her office in the SSS-Malabon branch when the bullet found her.

The gunmen fled after engaging operatives from the Department of Transportation and Communica-

tion in a shootout, police said. The DOTC men were in the area at the time reportedly on a confidential operation.

"The DOTC operatives fired at the escaping suspects and reportedly wounded one of them," Rios said.

Besides being a journalist, Orsolino was an official of his barangay and president of the Lupa Homeowners Association. He had come from his house at Phase I Lupa, Tonsuya, Malabon, when he was shot.

the media to be killed violently since the restoration of democracy in the country in 1986, according to records of the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUIP).

An incurrer tally based on reports from various sources, including NU-JP, put the death count at 101.

We gathered that he used to travel with someone and it was the first time that he travelled alone in his car," Rios said.

He said the assailants, who might have been waiting for Orsolino to be alone, apparently were cruising beside his car when they opened fire from close range.

"Based on the broken glass win- port from Alcuin Papa

dow on the driver's side and the location of the bullet holes, they sidled up close to the car," Rior said.

The assailants abandoned their motorcycle, with license plate number UN-4534, and took over a passing white FX Tamaraw being driven by one Manuelito Navarro. The FX was later found abandoned along Road-10.

Pound in the vehicle were a black sweater printed with the word "Guardians," a grey shirt that said "Compliments of Mayor Pidi of Dasmariñas, Cavite" on it and a face towel.

Orsolino died from a lone gunshot wound in the abdomen.

A cousin of Orsolino's, Elpidio Melendres, said the journalist and his wife Alissa had five children. all of them still in grade school.

Called "Ator" by his relatives, Orsolino had helped residents in his neighborhood acquire the land on which they had been considered squatters before, Melen-

He said Orsolino was on his Orsolino was the 78th member of last term as a barangay councilor and had always been the object of envy of some residents, who also wanted to become leaders in their area.

The Malacañang Press Corps condemned the murder.

president Maglalang said: "We hope that they (the authorities) will put a final stop to the continued killings and harassment of Filipino journalists across the country."

MPC said Orsolino "will be fondly remembered as one of those who refused to be silenced in upholding the principles of freedom of the press." With a re-

2 new slays for task force

From page Al

tabloid reporter Albert Orsolino in Caloocan City. (Story at left.)

The manner in which the killings were carried out-assussins on motorcycles-bore similaritles to the murders of militants also involving motorcycle-riding gunmen during the years 1986-88, leftist groups

Some of the officials in the Armed Forces at the time are now serving President Macapagal-Arroyo, they said.

Several of the more recent killings of activists were also carried out by armed men on motor-

The killers of Doton were armed with a .45-cal. automatic pistol and had tailed the brothers before shooting them along a village road, Chief Insp. Federico Paneda said.

"We were aboard a tricycle and were following them but they were too fast," said Laida Doton, daughter of Cancio, who was with other relatives at the time of the shooting.

"Somewhere in Camangaan, we heard shots and we even saw the motorcycle [the suspects were riding] going back to the town proper," Laida said.

"Then we saw my father and my uncle already lying on the road."

Don't blame GMA

Laida said the killers' red Honda motorcycle had been seen around the village the past sever-

Militants have blamed the

killings of activists on the military which, in turn, said the murders could be the result of factional rivairles among leftist groups.

Doton was chair of the farmers group Timpuyog ti Mansalon a Mangwayawaya ti Agno (Timmawa), which has been opposing the operation of the San Roque multipurpose dam project at the Pangasinan-Benguet border.

The group has also been working for just compensation for gold panners displaced by the dam.

Doton had led Timmawa's antigovernment rallies.

Leftist purges

Malacahang said it was unfair to put the blame on Ms Arroyo.

"I think these things are beyond the control of the President. I don't think it's proper to think that just because a militant has been killed, the government had something to do with it," Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita told reporters.

Ermita disputed claims that the political killings were inspired by a government crackdown on leftists.

"I don't see it. In my long experience in government and the military, government forces have always been blamed whenever an alleged leftist element dies. But this has been rarely proved so we should stop saying there is a pattern," said Ermita.

No suspects

He said that if there were purges in the communist ranks, these "were being undertaken by the leftist members themselves."

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Ermita cited Romulo Kintanar, Filemon "Popoy" Lagman and Arturo Tabara as examples of leftists killed by their comrades, or former comrades.

"We have no suspects but we believe that his (Doton's) death is linked to the issues that he fought for which concerned the welfare of the farmers and the unfulfilled promises of the government to those affected by the dam," said Fr. Teri Revollido, chair of Bayan-Pangasinan.

In Pampanga, police have produced an artist's sketch of one of the two killers of Bayan Muna coordinator Manuel Nardo, who was gunned down in the City of San Fernando on Saturday.

The killer was between 28 and 33 years old, between 5'7" and 5'9" tall and of heavy build, police said, adding that the sketch did not match the photographs of criminals in the police files.

Challenge to PNP

"It's as if we're being challenged," police spokesperson Senior Supt. Samuel Pagdilao said of the news of Doton's assassination, which occurred soon after the government created Task Force Usig to look into the killings of political activists, journalists, politicians and other civil ser-

"But this will not dampen the resolution of the task force to get to the bottom of these killings," he added.

The task force has tallied 122 killings of activists under the Asroyo presidency and said that in-25 of those cases, the military or paramilitary units were the suspects. Thirteen other deaths were believed to be the result of purges within the leftist ranks, it said.

The Inquirer has recorded 123 deaths during the five-year peri-

Veiled threat

House Deputy Minority Leader Satur Ocampo said he and the other four members of the "Betesun 5" party-list lawmakers could be the next targets of "death squads" killing political militants.

"When you look at it, logically we're targets of physical elimination," said Ocampo.

He said Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan, commander of the 7th Army Infantry Division, had actulives by classifying us as enemies of the state."

Ocampo called for an independent commission to be headed by a retired justice and to include persons of known probity to investigate the killings.

Replying to an e-mailed query, Luis Jalandoni, chair of the negotiating panel of the communist-led umbrella group National Democratic Front, noted that many of the killings had been committed by gunmen on motor,

NPA punishment

"Such motorcycle-riding assassins were common during the 1986-1988 period ... They were used to destroy the Partido ng. Bayan and mass organizations in the localities," Jalandoni said, from the Netherlands.

Communist spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal vowed that New People's Army rebels; would punish the military units concerned and the officials behind the series of murders.

In a statement, Rosal said the CPP condemned as "utterly malicious and complete lies" government claims that the murders of activists were part of "internal" purging" inside the movement.

He assailed government claims it had discovered another mass grave of alleged NPA purge vic-

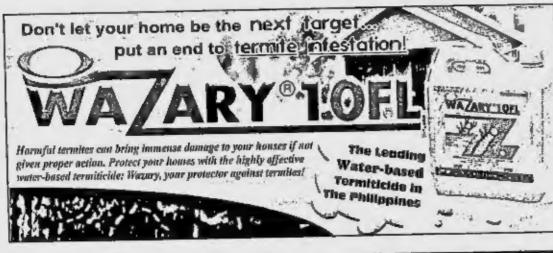
"To prop up their psywar offensive, the AFP is once again busy, hauling their collection of old skeletons from their bodegas, dumping them into new excavations and portraying these as so-called NPA mass graves," Rosal

Appeal from church

CPP officials owned up to killing hundreds of members suspected of being government agents during their "Internal cleansing" in the 1980s. Perpetrators of the cleansing were eventu; ally punished, according to the

The National Council of Churches in the Philippines and the Promotion of Church People's Response also called on the Arroyo administration to investigate the killing of militant pastor, Jemias Tinambacan in Misamis, Occidental and of other church people before him. Sharon Rose Duremdes, NCCP.

secretary general, urged Ms Arroyo "to act and act swiftly in giving justice" to the victims. With reports from Luige A. del Puerto, Michael Lim Ubac and Dona Passibugan in Manila; Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luson Desk; ally issued a "veiled threat to our Desiree Calusa, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau; Delfin T Mallari Jr. and Marion Ramos, PDI Southern Luson Bureau; Michael E Sarcauga, Jeffrey M. Tupas and Judy Quiros, PDI Mindanao Bureau; and Maielle Montavre



National Transmission Corporation Republic of the Philippines

Section I.

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid Supply and Delivery of Network Switches, SFP Transceiver, Security

Software, Firewall and Symantec Renewal (Reference No.: PB060215-EL0018)

- The Metional Transmission Corporation, Head Office Region (TRANSCO-HO) through the CY2006 Corporate Budget approved by the TRANSCO Board, Intends to apply the sum of Php 2,351,000.00 being the Total Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the Supply and Delivery of Network Switches, SFP Transcriver, Security Software, Firewall and Symanies Renewal. Bids received in success of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid
- The TRANSCO-HO new Invites Bids from Eligible Bidders for Various ICT Resources. Delivery of the GOODS is required within thirty (30) calendar days from receipt of approved Purchase Order. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.
- Sidding will be conducted through open compolitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/left criteria as specified in the implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/solo proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) Interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from the Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the postqualification procedure.
- A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Interested Bidders, starring May 10, 2006 to June 13, 2006 from 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. at the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable Ice in the amount of One Thousand Peace (PhP 1,000.00). The method of payment will be CASH. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
- The TRANSCO-HO will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on May 29, 2006 at 2:00 P.M. at same address below. Requests for clarifications on the bid documents should be submitted before the Pre-Bid Conference
- Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before 2:00 P.M. of June 14, 2006. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security

	Form of Security	Amount
3.	Cash, certified check, cashier's check manager's check, bank draft or irrevocable lotter of credit	1% of ABC
2.	Bank guarantee -	1.5% of ABC
1.	Surety bond	2.5% of ABC
4.	Foreign government guarantee	100% of ABC

or an equivolent amount in a fracty convertible currency. Late hids shall not be

- Bid opening shall be on June 14, 2005 / 2:30 P.M. at the Admin Conference Rm sam. nddress balow. Bids will be oponed in the presence of the Bidders' timesentatives who choose to attend at the address below
- The National Transmission Corporation resources the right to accept or reject any Bid. to arrest the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the effected Bidder or Bidders.

Hattonal Transmission Corporation, Head Office Region Mr Armando N Ochoa, BAC Charms MMD Office, GIF TransCo Mam Bldg. Power Center, Quaran Ave. corner BIR Road Dibmun, Quezon City Tel. No. (63.) 9812235 / Fax No. (632) 9228432 Website: www.transco.bl-

(Spd.) ARMANDO N. OCHOA Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

Republic of the Philippines Province of Cotabato Municipality of ALAMADA

INVITATION TO BIDS

CONSTRUCTION OF BAY-ANG POTABLE WATER SYSTEM LEVEL III

"The Works Include the General Requirements: Source Developments and Storage Facilities Works: Transmission and Distributor Facilities Works; Pavament Demolition, Excevation and Restoration Works; Supply of Maintenance Materials and Tools"

- The Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) has received a four from the Asian Development Bank toward the cost of the Mindanae Basic Urban Services Sector Project (MBUSSP), and it intends to apply part or the whole of the proceeds of this loan, logalities with the GOP counterpart (unde, to payments under the contract for
- the Construction of Bay-app Potable Water System Level III. The Municipality of Alamada, Cotabalo now evoles socied Bids from oligible Bidders for the Construction of Bay-and Potable Water System Level III which has a pipeline length of approximately 23 kilometers pixe. The Works shall include the general Requirements, Source Developments and Storage Facilities Works; Transmission and Distribution Facilities Works, Perennent Demoklon, Excavation and Restoration Works, Supply of Namineannos Materials and Tools. Completion of Works is required by 368 calendar days. Works in required by 360 calendar days.
- Bidding will be conducted in accordance with relevant procedures for open competitive bidding as specified in the implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," to the extent it is consistent with Asian Development Bank's procurement procedures and is open to all Stoders from eligible source countries as defined in "Guidelines for Procurement Linder Asian Development Bank."
- The documents required in the Engibility Documents shall be submitted as part of the Technical Documents of the Bidders as provided in the instructions to Bidders
- Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), Municipality of Alemada, Cotabate and insp Documents at the address great below from \$100 AM to 5:00 PM on May 15, 2006
- A complete set of Bidding Documents in English may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-retundable fee of Tan Thousand Posos (Pho 19,000,00).
- The BAC, Municipality of Alemada will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all Engible Bidders on June 5, 2006 2:38P.M. at the Municipal Hall, Alemada, Cotabata
- 8. Ebgible Bidders must submit their Bids at the address below on or before June 18. 2006 @ 2:00 pm. At Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form of Manager's Check/Casher's Check/Cardinot Check and in an amount of Eight Hundred Fifty Thousand Pasas (PhP \$50,000,00) or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Birds shell not be accepted. Bird opening shall be on June 19, 2006 @ 2:00 pm at the Municipal Half. Alamada, Cetabato, Birds will

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE Attn: Mr. Amonio G. Gabunaise Municipal Assessor's Office Municipality of Alameda Province of Cotabato

9. To be considered sligible and qualified a Bidder must:

(FDI-May \$1.5 17, 2000)

- have a successful experience as prime contractor in the construction of at least one (1) work of a nature and complexity equivalent to the Works during the last five (5) years, such being ventilable from completion caraficates. To comply with this requirement the single contract cited should be at Issui Twenty Seron Million Five Hundred Thousand Posos (PhP 27,500,980,98
- have a minimum average annual construction surrover ever the last three (3) years equal to <u>Yhirty Faur. Million Pages (PhP 34,090,806.98)</u>.
- submit audited balance sheets or, if not required by the law of the applicants country, other financial statements acceptable to the Procuring Entity, for the last five (5) years to demonstrate the expent soundness of the applicants financial position and its prospective long-term profession.
- Completion of the Works is required within 360 Calendar Days from the Start of Construction

The Municipality of Alemada, Sciabata recoves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract eward, without thereby incurring any liability to the effected Bidder or Bidders. BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

Attention: Mr Antonio G. Gabunales Municipal Assessor's Office Municipal Half, Alamada, Collabate Contact No. 09179576291 (BOD.) ANTONIO 6. GABUNALES

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their delivery of approximately 1.416 sacks of Freshly Miled Premium Grade Communical Rico.

Supply and door to door delivery of the GOODS is required within their 100 calendar days when
contract signing receipt of purchase order. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in
Section II of the Bidding Documents, featuration to Biddiers (118).

The SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the supply and door to

Bridding will be conducted through open competitive bedding procedures using non-discretionary parel fall criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (RR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Etipino critizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least study percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to chizons of the Philippines, and to critizens or organizations of a country the lows or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Etipino critizens at a country the lows or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Etipino critizens surround to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commismental Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the digitality check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section 1 of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (C.B) shall advining to the post-post-bidder and refer to finally determine responsiveness of the (LCB) shall delivence to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the tid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be availed to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such illuming the post

treevested Biddors may distain further information from the SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM ansimped

the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8 AM TO 5 PM A complete set of Belding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below A comprese set or becoming Documents many bit purchased by interested discuss from the address smooth and upon payment of a nonrelundable fee in the amount of <u>P10,000.00</u>. The method of payment will be on a cosh base/mintager's check payable to SSS to be paid at the SSS Casheeng Department, SSS Mann Bidg. Ground Boor, upon accomplishment of SSS Form R-6. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prespective Bidder or his authorized representative.

The SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on May 12 2025 at 2 00mm, Green Roam, 12" Flact, SSS Mann Bldg., East Avenue, Dismant, Quezon

thids and displainty requirements must be submitted at the Green Room, 12* Floor, SSS Main Building on <u>Arrae 02. 2005 not later than 2.000 no.</u> All Bets must be accompared by a Bid security in a form and amount indicated in the Did Tender Documents. Late Dids shall not be accepted.

Bid opening shall be on June 02, 2005 at 2 (10p. m., Groon Reens, 12° Floor, SSS Main Bidg., East Average, Drivnan, Quezon City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to elliend at the address given. The SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM coveres the right to accept or reject any Bid. to accept the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract the arthur thereby incurring any bability to the affacted Bidders.

Old and Awarda Committee The Secretarial O' Floor, SSS Moin Buikling East Avenue, Doman, Quezon Cay Tet # 922-2091, 924-1380, 920-6401 incut 5491 Email - bactifass gay ph Factorile number - (DF) 024-7300

THE CHAIRMAN

(PO) - May 17, 2006)

BIOS & AWARDS COMMITTEE

(PS) - May 10 ft 17, 2008)

Gov't elated by 1st major victory in tax credit scam

MALACANANG YESterday cheered its
first major victory in
the government's
seven-year battle to
prosecute a multibillion tax credit scam
saying that this
would boost government efforts to clamp
down on tax fraud.

"It's a victory for the government and we are happy about the resolution of the case. The tax credit problem will not only involve Shell but also other companies that availed themselves of the tax credit in the past," said Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor.

The Court of Appeal reversed a previous ruling and ordered Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. to pay the government P570 million in tax liabilities for using tax credit certificates that were fraudulently secured to offset its liabilities in 1998.

liabilities in 1998.

The TCCs were acquired from Faustino Chingkoe whose garments companies issued bogus tax credit certificates or instruments that entitle bearer to a refund of taxes. The tax credit certificates can be sold to another company to offset its tax liabilities.

"The bottom line here is that while we achieved victory we have to ensure that nothing like this will be repeated in the future," Defensor said in an interview.

Three more casés—one against Shell and two others against Petron Corp.—are still pending in court.

A presidential task force formed in 1999 to investigate the scam tagged one of Chingkoe's firm for around P131 million in ray credit certificates from 1994 to 1997 despite a 1993 closure order enforced by the Department of Environthent and Natural Resources. The govern ment issues a tax crec it certificate.

Cherish houses, cops told

NOTING THE DAN ters that policementake in carrying out their duties, Vice President Noli de Castro vesterday urged them to cherish "with the same fervor" the housing privilege given them by the government and the private tector represented by the Gawad Kalinga.

De Castro, chair of the Housing and Unban Development Coordinating Council, made the pitch during the faunching of the Pulis Kalinga Macabulos Prior Housing Project in Camp Macabulos in

Tariac city. He said that while overnment was ph britizing the house heeds of the informaector such as those iving along the right of-way of the PNR North and South ines, the house ector was also focus ing on the same needs of the govern ment sector, particul arly the low-salaring mployees.

Under the Institutional Housing Virginian of the government, priority is an to the teach oldiers, policement LGU employed Cynthia D. Balana



RP joins unprecedented drill on tsunami evacuation

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people to hazards of disastrous events," said Renato Solidum Jt., "It's important always to be head of the Philippine Institute of

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an American Immigration Lawyer.

(Phivoles), which monitors volcanic eruptions, earthquakes and tsunami. "That's better than having to

do a search and rescue later," Solidum said. During the drill early Wednesday, the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center in Hawaii will send out warnings about mock earth-

quakes off the coasts of Luzon and Chile powerful enough to set off a tsunami across the vast

Governments of the participating countries will then see how fast they receive the warnings and how rapidly they can relay it to their domestic emergency alert systems.

Mock evacuation

While other countries will stop at that, the Philippines will stage an evacuation of residents in the far-flung coastal village of Buhatan in Santo Domingo, Albay, 340 km southeast of Manila.

Isolated by mountains and distance, normally laid-back Buhatan was a beehive of activity on Tuesday as Phivoics personnel installed roadside metal signs pointing the way to safety during the drill.

Huge streamers announced the "first-ever trans-Pacific tsunami drill" called "Exercise Pacific Wave 2006." Children milled around, gawking at outsiders and journalists.

So happy

"We're so happy some people are advising us how to deal with such a disaster. I won't be as nervous if it does happen," said Sonia Siapno, a 54-year-old house-

Simplicio Balmas, a 74-year-old retired fisherman with 11 children, understands the urgency of the drill and has been walking briskly lately to be able to join the mock evacuation despite his arthritis.

Balmas said he saw how a pow-



FOR THE FIRST TIME, a tsunami drill with 24 countries participating will involve testing a warning system in the Pacific Ocean which has been in place since 1965 but had not been tested in an ocean-wide exercise. A warning sign is set up in the far-flung coastal village of Buhatan, Santo Domingo, Albay.

erful typhoon brought walls of seawater crashing on Buhatan, killing 13 villagers in the early 1950s.

"I don't want to see that scene again. There were so many dead people and people looked so helpless," he said as he stood by the sun-splashed Albay Gulf, its waves gently slapping the shore.

Lifesaving

"I know we're doing a lifesaying exercise, but I still feel nervous," he added.

Buhatan, sandwiched between the Albay Gulf and the Philippine Sea, is often lashed by typhoons and has been hit by ashfalls and debris from the nearby Mayon Volcano.

A narrow road leading to the village was partly blocked by landslides from a storm last week. Despite furking dangers, there is no police station, hospital, fire station

or telephone lines. Some villagers rely on mobile phones or simply rush to a town 9 km away aboard pedicabs during an emergency.

While the villagers are no strangers to typhoons and volcanic eruptions, hardly anyone was aware Buhatan could be fut by a tsunami until Phivoles officials explained the nature of the tsunami drill, according to Rene Arante of Phivoics.

Foreign observer

Ajith Weerawardena, a meteorologist from Sri Lanka and one of the foreign officials observing the drill, said he traveled to the village to learn something that could be used to save lives in his country.

Weerawardena lamented there was no early warning system when the 2004 Isunami struck Sri Lanka, killing about 39,000 peo-

ple and damaging 40,000 houses. "If there was a warning system

during that time, we would have rescued a lot of people," he told The Associated Press.

An archipelago of more than 7,000 islands, the Philippines is flanked by the Pacific Ocean to the east and the South China Sea to the west with undersea trenches-gotential quake triggers-naming alongside its coast on both sides.

40 tsunamis

The Philippines has been struck by about 40 tsunami in the past 400 years, Solidum said.

A 7.9-magnitude quake generated tsunami waves in the Moro Gulf in Mindanao in 1976, killing about 3,700 people. Another powerful earthquake set off by a local fault whipped up killer waves that killed 78 people on the island of Mindoro in 1994. Reports from AP and Edgar Alejo, PDI South-

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RP climbers near Everest summit

From page A1

and would have reached Camp 2 (6,400 meters or 21,000 feet) at press time, according to his local contacts.

In making the final assault, Garduce is expected to consider the weather as well as advice from his Sherpa climbing partner on whether "the mountain gods are showing us the way to the

14 approaches

Garduce left Base Camp on Sunday and should be in Camp 3 today or tomorrow. He will trek another day to reach Camp 4.

"Ildoy-tuloy na. Wola nang bahaan. Sa tuktok na dapat (It's all systems go. There will be no turning back. It should be the summit now)," Garduce was quoted as telling his contacts.

The Filipino climbers are taking the Hillary or Southeast Ridge Route, one of the more popular routes to the top. One of the great dangers there is well below the summit, at the Khumbu Ice Fall.

Among the 14 other approaches are the Northeast Ridge Route, the Southwest Pace and the East or Kangshung Pace. The first scouting expeditions and attempts to reach

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the peak were made by British teams using the north approach in the 1920s. Pablo said that Oracion reached Camp 4

(8,000 m or 26,000 ft) yesterday afternoon Manila time, and that Emata was at Camp 3 (6,828 m or 22,376 ft). There are good weather forecasts in the

next two days. So while the weather is good and the climbers are feeling fine, they are pushing on," Pablo said. "But there are no assurances in moun-

taineering," he said, adding that in the case of Oracion, Camp 4 was "the point of no re-"If the weather holds, Oracion will rest for

a few hours and leave tonight (Tuesday) for the summit at around 10 p.m. Manila time," Pablo said.

He said the fixing of ropes from the Balcony, an area past Camp 4, to the summit would have been finished by the time Oracipn started his final leg of the climb.

Death Zone

Camp 4 is also known as the Death Zone, where oxygen deprivation caused by the high altitude and physical and mental exhaustion start to take a toll on the climbers.

From their respective camps, the climbers will need to bring at least one oxygen tank up to the summit.

(Oxygen deprivation poses profound danger because it hampers crucial decision-making, among other things. In "Into Thin Air," his account of an ill-fated expedition in 1996 where at least 11 of his fellow climbers died in a storm, Jon Krakauer recalled standing at the peak and not being able to summon the energy to care as he "stared absently at the vast sweep of earth below." More than 29,000 feet "up in the troposphere," he wrote, "there was so little oxygen reaching my brain that rhy mental capacity was that of a slow child.")

Final push from Camp 4

Once climbers reach Camp 4, they will ress for only a few hours and then start their final push at around midnight to try to reach the summit in the morning.

This will allow climbers to begin their de scent in the afternoon because descending at night is perilous.

Setting records

The FPMRE had originally scheduled its Everest climb next year.

But at around the time Garduce left for Nepal in March, the FPMEE decided to sehil its two strongest climbers, Oracion and Enja ta, to try to reach the peak this year as a sortion "reconnaissance climb" for the 2007 attempt

In August of last year, Oracion and Emata-made it to the top of Mt. Muztagh-Ata (24,75% ft) in the Himalayan range and set the record for the highest altitude reached by a Filipino

That record was broken a month late: when Garduce reached the peak of Mt. Clin Oyu (26,906 ft), the sixth highest mountain

The FPMEE is being supported by AR CBN, while Garduce is being backed by rivil network GMA 7.

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Honor deal, Drilon urged

MALACAÑANG HAS JUMPED INTO THE leadership fray at the Senate as it urged Senate President Franklin Drilon to honor his "gentleman's agreement" and yield his post to Sen. Manuel Villar Ju

Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor said that what Drilon would do with the gentleman's agreement he struck with Villar in 2004 would "speak a lot about the kind of person he is."

"Honoring a gentleman's agreement will determine what kind of political character Drilon has. (If he breaks it), it will cast doubts on how he will conduct things in the future," said Defensor in an interview with the INQUINER.

Villar said that he expected Drilon to honor the gentleman's agreement they reached two years ago when the two squared off for the Senate presidency. The two agreed on a power-sharing deal to avert a messy power play at the Senate.

Drilon has declared that he would turn over his post to Villar by July if the billionaire real estate developer would be able to muster I the votes of the Senate majority.



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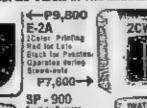
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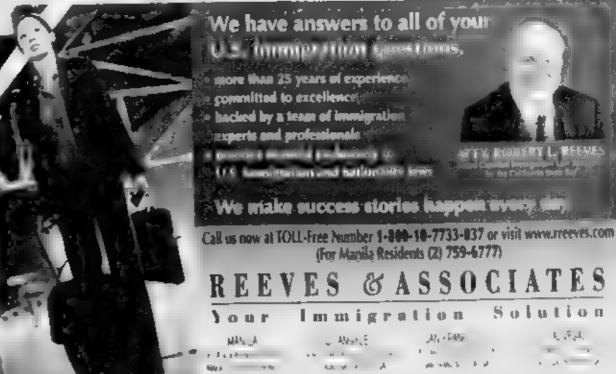
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New papal nuncio arrives

By Nikko Dizon

ARCHBISHOP FERNANDO FILONI, THE new papal nuncio, yesterday said he would be working closely with leaders of the Catholic Church in shepherding their flock.

The Philippines has the biggest Catholic population in Asia.

Filoni, the Holy See's new ambassador to the Phil ppines, arrived yesterday at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia) at 3:30 p.m. via That Airways flight TG 620.

Among those who welcomed Filoni were Mania Archbishop Gaudencio Cardinal Ro-sales, Fr. James Renter, executive secretary of the National Office of the Mass Media, and officials of the Department of Foreign Affairs and the airport authority.

As apostolic nuncio, Filoni, 60, represents Pope Benedict XVI.

MONEY LAUNDERING

DOJ to summon SMC, bank execs to probe

By Armand N. Nocum, Margaux Ortiz and Christine O. Avendaño

THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE WILL invite top officials of San Miguel Corp. and United Coconut Planters Bank as well as alleged cronies of ousted President Joseph Estrada to shed light on accusations of money-laundering made by a former beauty queen.

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said those to be invited include SMC president Ramon Ang, former UCPB president Lorenzo Tan, current UCPB chief executive officer Jeronimo Kilayko and vice presidents Aifredo Baurista and Rafael Bueno Jr., and alleged Estrada cromes Jame Dichavez, Jimmy Borromeo and Robert Sobrepeña.

There are [other] people mentioned who could be invited," said Gonzalez, referring to the recent news report in the

based former beauty queen Joelle Marie transactions. Henson Pelaez as accusing Estrada and the others of opening a bank account in her name without her permission allegedly to launder money.

The invitation, Gonzalez said, would be for the purpose of a "case buildup" against those cited in the report which "mentioned a P500 million in public funds" and transactions conducted in a "public bank."

Pelaez, second numer-up in the 1999 Binibining Pilipinas beauty contest who now lives in Los Angeles, said she discovered that an account was opened in United Coconut Planters Bank in her name but the transactions, in the millions of pesos, were not hers.

She said the transactions involved money transfers and the acquisition and sale of stocks and bonds.

She said she had filed a P500-milhon lawsuit against those who used her name and forged her signatures on the

Gonzalez said yesterday he had asked the National Bureau of Investigation to coordinate with the Anti-Money Laundering Council in investigating the matter.

For his part, NBI Acting Director Nestor Mantaring yesterday ordered Interpol to investigate the report that Estrada may have been involved in the laundering of funds that may have been part of the "mussing" P3.2-billion Jose Velarde account through the bank account in Pelaez's name.

"I have left it to Interpol to decide whom to interview first among the accused based in this country." Mantaring told reporters th an interview

Mantaring said he had also ordered the NBI Anni-Fraud and Computer Crimes Division to coordinate with the Anti-Money Laundering Council in the case.

But no less than President Macapagal-Arroyo's chief of staff Michael Defensor

vesterday took up the cudgels for Estrada, saying there was no basis at this point to conclude the former President or any member of his family were involved in

money laundering. "I can assure you that indeed money laundering happened but as to the involvement of the Estrada family, that is not conclusive," Defensor told reporters.

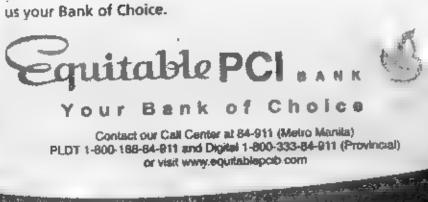
He said he saw the documents himself after meeting with the mother of Pelaez, Blanquita Pelaez, two weeks ago.

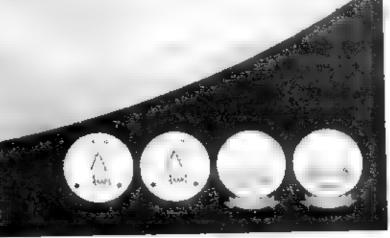
He said Blanquita Pelaez had sought the meeting to show him the papers that purported to be the money trail of the illicit bank transactions.

Petaez, it will be recalled, was the USbased businesswoman who sued then Philippine National Police Director General Panfilo Lacson over unpaid handcuffs she had sold to the PNP She won the case against Lacson in the US but it is not known if she was able to collect any damages.



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Poor women now accepting family planning, says NSO survey

By Christian V. Esguerra

DESTITUTE WOMEN, LONG CONSIDERED A problem sector in the government's reproductive health advocacy, are showing signs of accepting family planning, according to a recent national survey

Among 6,108 Filipino women currently engaged in family planning, the poor ones outnumbered their "non poor" counterparts in terms of "intending" to continue the practice, according to the 2005 Family Planning Survey, conducted by the National Statistics Office

In fact, 90 percent of the respondents in both classifications "would be willing to pay for their contraceptive supplies" in the future, the survey showed.

"That's one step already because they are willing. It's more difficult if you're poor yet you still don't want to practice family planning," NSO administrator Carmelita Ericta told reporters after the presentation of the survey results in Quezon City yesterday.

Poor, not poor

Among the respondents who are anto family planning, the NSO found out that one out of four currently married women "intends to stop doing so." Ericta attributed the attitude to the women's plan to have children already.

The Family Planning Survey, which the NSO began conducting in 1995, had around 50,000 respondents for last year's study, Ericta said.

The women surveyed were aged between 15 and 49 years old and classified either as "poor" or "non-poor"

Ericta said the social classification was gauged through the respondents' possession of "household amenines," meaning apphances.

The women's willingness to use and buy their own contraceptives surfaced in the wake of another set of findings showing that the contraceptive prevalence rate (or the rate Filipinos are using contraceptives) "has not changed in the last five years."

Method of choice

Of the currently married Filipino women surveyed, 49.3 percent were into contraceptive methods while 50 7 percent of them were not, according to the NSO study.

Among those using contraceptives, 36 percent were into modern methods, with pills as still the method of choice (17.1 percent). At least 13 percent of the respondents were engaged in traditional methods like calendar, rhythm and periodic abstinence

methods and withdrawal By next year, the government will no longer receive contraceptive donations from abroad and will have to come up with

its own supplies In the NSO survey, three out of five married women using contraceptives said they got their supplies and services from the pub-

he sector. "Government hospitals are the principa. source of services for ligation and vasecto-

my," the survey said "Willingness' is the keyword here," Ericta told reporters. "They (poor married women) are willing to pay for their supplies but they just don't have the capacity. Here is

where help should come." Among the country's 17 regions, Cagayan Valley registered the highest contraceptive prevalence rate at 58 percent, followed by Northern Mindanao (57 percent) and Central Luzon (\$5 percent), according to the

The Antonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao had the lowest rate with 16 percent.

"Pamily planning practice is associated with the socio-economic characteristics of the women," Ericta said in a statement. "Women who are elementary graduates or have reached a higher level of education are more likely to practice family planning than those who have not completed elementary school or those with no education." Erika Sauler

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Because no country can move forward if perpetually distracted by anti-insurgency campaigns, governments have tried, with varying degrees of success, to accomplish through negotiations what all-out war can never achieve: an end to fighting, and the start of rebuilding. Painfully, slowly, our country has learned that the politics of exclusion and persecution breeds more evils than it stamps out; and that the politics of negotiation and compromise achieves much more in terms of stability and peace.

Since the Edsa Revolution, the policy of the state has been to negotiate a peace while gradually expanding the democratic space. This process reached a high point during the Ramos administration, in which a general achieved what the politicians failed to do. Since then, however, negotiations have given way to hostilities, with varying degrees of success.

However, what sets apart the Arroyo administration from previous ones (except, perhaps, the Marcos administration) is its indifference and even tacit support for extralegal solutions to the insurgency problem. Where administrations (and rebels) once used military offensives as sticks to make the carrot of negotiations more attractive, the Arroyo administration has abandoned negotiations, and half-heartedly pursued military offensives. Instead, political liquidations have become the defining characteristic of the government's attitude toward its ideological opponents.

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President Arroyo and Gonzalez and their enemies from the party lists won't pay the immediate price for such bloodthirsty posturing. It is the people who will. Provinces plagued by insurgency will continue to bleed, and their residents will continue to seek refuge elsewhere. No rehabilitation, much less improvement of local economies or infrastructure can take place. This serves the purposes of a government that prefers a state of conflict to peace, which might turn people's minds to the harsh realities of our national life. It serves the interests of insurgents who would stubbornly fight, even if it means reducing the mountains and then the plains to

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WHAT COULD PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroyo and Sen. Miriam Defensor Santiago have talked about on the way to and from Saudi Arabia? Before Santiago left the Philippines, she was, judging from her previous statements, still against Charter change. After coming home with President Arroyo, she is singing a different tune. She said there will be no more Senate by July when the 13th Congress convenes as a constituent assembly to amend the Constitution and shift to a parliamentary govern-ment. What could GMA have told her or offered her while on board the plane to make her change ber mind?

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A snap election seems to be also in the offing for the National Press Club which held its own elections last May 7. But instead of only one election, the NPC had two. The two competing tickets held their own separate elections last Sunday. The committee on elections created by NPC president Antonio Antonio held its election on the fourth floor of the

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So now the NPC has two sets of officers. Which one is the legitimate winner? Parang national elections.

Reyes said her ticket is the legitimate winner. It had the roster of NPC members, while the Mabasa ticket had none.

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That election cannot be an accurate measure of the wishes of the members. The judge hearing the case may be inclined to nullify both elections and call for a new one, this time supervised by the court.

In the Senate, there may or may not be a new

president. Senate President Franklin Drilon has stated that he would honor his agreement with Sen. Manuel Villar to split the six-year term of the Senate president. He said he would resign as president by July But that would not automatically make Villar Senate president. He would have to be elected by the 23 senators. But Villar may not be able to get the required 13 votes. He has only four sure votes.

In fact, there is no group that has the numbers to unseat Drilon. He has only five sure votes, the opposition has seven, or possibly eight, and UFOs ("unidentified flying objects") seven or six. Since no group has enough votes to elect a new president, the status quo would prevail and Drilon would remain as Senate president.

Sen. Alfredo Lim, who was a guest at the Kapihan sa Manila last Monday along with Chair Bayani Pernando of the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA), confirmed this division of forces in the Senate. Lim said that even assuming seven UPOs would vote for Villar with the four senators identified with him and the administration, that would add up to only 11 votes. Lam, who belongs to the opposition, said the seven opposition senators are likely vote for Drilon. That, plus the five votes Drilon controls makes 12-one vote short of the magic 13. That one vote would not be hard to get once you are almost there, Lim noted

For his part, Pernando said that while traffic may be heavy during the opening of classes next month, the light at the end of the ninnel of Metro Manila's chaotic traffic can already be seen. He said the MMDA would plant computer chips in the windshields of all the buses with franchises for the Edsa route. With these chips, it would be easy to spot the colorum and out-of-line buses.

Traffic congestion on Edsa, he said, is caused by buses, only one-third full, lined up bumper-tobumper along almost the whole length of Edsa Many of them have franchises for provincial routes but their operators insist on plying Edsa

They have to go back to the provinces, where there is an extreme lack of transportation, or their franchises would be cancelled, Fernando

Generations

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros



colegiale and has brothers who are PMA graduates and military officers.

Both had daughters who suddenly dropped out of school and joined the NPA, if not entirely to their absolute surprise at least to their monumental chagrin. Both knew their daughters had been attending all sorts of meetings and had been expressing themselves vocally, even stridently, about the rampant abuses and injustices in their country. Both never expected them to disappear one day, leaving only letters that explained why they did what they did and whose contents could only remind one of the extravagant sentiments of Richard Lovelace's "To Lucasta, On Going to the Wars:" "I could not love

thee, Dear, so much/ Loved I not honor more." Paul's daughter was captured in the wilds of the north. Paul spent some time shuttling back and forth there to see to his daughter's welfare and to plead with bardened people whose bearts melted before opera not to harm her. His efforts succeeded; he managed after some time to get his daughter released into his custody with strenuous avowals of making sure she would how to legally prescribed paths. Maria's daughter was never caught, she surfaced eventually after some time. Both Paul's and Maria's daughters are now married, and though they have not abandoned their revolutionary ideals, they have found other ways to serve the people.

I'm not really sure if that is a case of all's well that ends well. Depends on where you stand, I

I personally would not have known how to deal with something like that if it had happened to me. As I said in a column before, I can only

unagine today the horrendous anxiety we must have put our parents through in our time each time we left home, toothbrush and red books in overnight bags, to disappear for God knows how long (it was seldom overnight) If you can conjure all some of things in your mind today when your teenage son or daughter isn't home yet at 2:00 a.m., your parents would have done the same thing about you. And more: Today you know only that at that hour your kid is courting other kids. Then your parents knew you were

courting disaster. All this has only bolstered my conviction about something I said last year. Which is why I am compelled to rage at an age when people expect me to hang my activism like spurs up a wall and go gently into the night. I do not continue to struggle-we, the people who are presumed to have grown older and wiser, do not continue to struggle-our kids will have to do it for us. We do not rise to protest insquity and stop abuse, our lads will have to do it for us. We do not shed off cynicism and a veteron mentality that says we've done our bit for God and country, we deserve our rest, our lods will risk their lives for us.

Of course, the choice the kids above have made, which is to embrace—and in Erika's case. even die for-a cause that history appears to have discredited, may seem to many of us to be more wasteful than heroic, more foolish than tragic. But if we look beyond the superficin, aspects of the cause they embraced to the spark of idealism that underlay it, to the boundless ca pacity of youth to bristle at injustice and fight for what is good and decent, to the awesome power of youth to unleash a storm of energy to do what their presumed elders and betters have found every justification not to do, then we must seriously ask ourselves if we are not in some way guilty of their deaths by dereliction of

We do not ask the questions, our kids will ask them for us. We do not live to make a better world for our kids, our kids will die to make one

Bring it on, GMA allies say of new impeach rap

yesterday dared the opposition to "cut the those policies to protect the government talk and just bring on their new impeach- and national interest, not the President." ment complaint" against President Macapagal-Arroyo even as they and some of the President's aides predicted nearly instant death for a second such indictment in just over a year

The challenge was contained in a statement issued by House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles jointly with Representatives Antonio Cuenco and Edwin Uy in which they also criticized a statement by Minority Leader Francis Escudero that opposition members who refuse to sign the new indictment should reave the House minority bloc-

Escudero said Monday that the new complaint against Ms Arroyo would be ready by the end of the month and would likely include the recent spate of killings of leftist activists and administration acts struck down by the Supreme Court as unconstitutional.

Malacahang was confident the new impeachment case would be immediately thrown out by a House dominated by members of the President's political coalition.

"Impeachment was junked in the first instance and will be junked again as a desperate move by a conspiracy of self-serving interests," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said in a statement. He added that the public was "not only weary but bored by these over-

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez used more colorful language with respect to what the administration would do when the new complaint is filed, which Escudero said could be during the President's State of the Nation address on July 27 "at the latest."

"We will kill it at the first instance," Gonzalez told reporters. "Why allow it to become a festering situation?"

Nograles said the opposition was resorting to the "aw of the jungle" with its threat to purge members who do not sign the impeachment complaint against the President.

"If the opposition still believes that impeachment would be a mere numbers game, then it (is) obvious that the majority would win because they have the numbers and they need not read or study the impeachment complaint anymore," the congressmen's joint statement said

The statement said the Supreme Court decisions on Executive Order 464, calibrated preemptive response (GPR) and Proclamation 1017 as grounds for impeachment would be a hard sell. "These will not stand as bases because there was no culpable violation of the Constitution or betrayar of pub-

DOE asks oil firms to offer **PUV** discounts

By Abigail L. Ho and Jerome Aning

THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY HAS ASKED oil firms to offer additional discounts to drivers of pubac utility vehicles after Malacañang on Monday slashed the tariff on oil for six months.

After a meeting with oll firm representatives yesterday, Energy Undersecretary Peter Anthony Abaya said the DOE was seeking a reprieve for the transport sector by moving to expand the discount on diesel fuel prices to P2 a liter, from the current P1 a liter.

"The tariff reduction will be applied to all products, across the board. We're not asking them to give discounts for LPG (cooking gas), gaso, me or even for diesel entirely. We just want them to give more discounts in their jeepney and bus lanes," Abaya said

Malacañang issued on Monday Executive Order 527 directing the reduction of the 3percent tariff on crude and refined petroleum product imports to between 2 and 0 percent, depending on world oil price trig-

The guidelines for the implementation of the order, including what consisted the trigger prices, are now being finanzed by the DOE.

Abaya said computations made by the DOE and the oil firms showed that a 1-percentage point tariff reduction would translate to savings of around P1 a liter for the oil firms. "The difference in our computations is just about 3 centavos a liter, so there shouldn't be a problem with that,"

Also yesterday, the militant labor group Kilusang Mayo Uno called for the repeal of the oil industry deregulation law, saying tariff reduction alone would not suffice to cushion the impact of rising oil prices.

"Weak government intervention in the form of tariff cuts cannot stop Shell, Caltex, Petron and new oil players from increasing their prices. They will always find ways and ambis to get away with frequent oil price hikes," said KMU spokesperson Prestoline Sayat

The government must seriously consider dropping the deregulation law and undertake centralized procurement efforts with regards to imported crude oil and refined petroleum products," Suyat said. With a report from Kris Bayos

MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE MAJORITY lic trust. The government implemented

Christine O. Avendaño and Armand N.







JUSTIC CORPORATION o. 96 Dasmarites St Binondo, Manife Philippin

Tel. Nos.: 241-5237 - 242-2048 to 49

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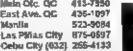
Thyroid Function Tests (FT3, FT4, T3, T4, TSH)

left and right lobes that look like a butterfly's wings. Small as it is, the thyroid has an enormously important job to do Thyroid function affects your metabolism, energy level, heart rate, weight control, and more. A routine evaluation of your thyroid hormone levels includes T3, T4, and TSH. These tests are used mainly to diagnose hyperthyroldism (overactive thyroid) and hypothyroidism (underactive thyroid). They may also be used to help evaluate a patient with an enlarged thyroid gland, called a gotter. Diagnosis of thyroid disease is based on symptoms and physical examination. Most thyroid problems can be managed well if properly diagnosed and treated flor more information consult your doctor

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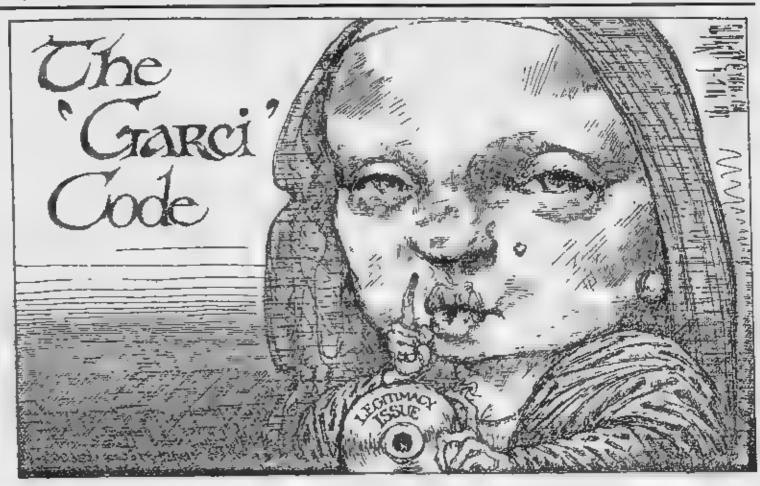
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That election cannot be an accurate measure of the wishes of the members. The judge hearing the case may be inclined to multify both elections and call for a new one, this time supervised by the court.

In the Senate, there may or may not be a new

president. Senate President Franklin Drilon has stated that he would honor his agreement with Sen. Manuel Villar to split the six-year term of the Senate president. He said he would resign as president by July. But that would not automatically make Villar Senate president. He would have to be elected by the 23 senators. But Villar may not be able to get the required 13 votes. He has only four sure votes.

In fact, there is no group that has the numbers to unseat Drilon. He has only five sure votes, the opposition has seven, or possibly eight, and UFOs ("unidentified flying objects") seven or six. Since no group has enough votes to elect a new president, the status quo would prevail and Drilon would remain as Senate president

Sen. Aifredo Lim, who was a guest at the Kapihan sa Manila last Monday along with Chair Bayani Fernando of the Metro Mamia Development Authority (MMDA), confirmed this division of forces in the Senate. Lim said that even assuming seven UFOs would vote for Villar with the four senators identified with him and the administration, that would add up to only 11 votes. Lim, who belongs to the opposition, said the seven opposition senators are likely vote for Drilon. That, plus the five votes Drilon controls makes 12-one vote short of the magic 13. That one vote would not be hard to get once you are almost there, Lim noted

For his part, Pernando said that while traffic may be heavy during the opening of classes next month, the light at the end of the tunnel of Metro Manila's chaone traffic can already be seen. He said the MMDA would plant computer chips in the windshields of all the buses with franchises for the Edsa route. With these chips, it would be easy to spot the colorum and out-of-line buses.

Traffic congestion on Edsa, he said, is caused by buses, only one-third ful., lined up humper-tobumper along almost the whole length of Edsa Many of them have franchises for provincial routes but their operators ussist on plying Edsa

They have to go back to the provinces, where there is an extreme lack of transportation, or their franchises would be cancelled, Fernando

Generations

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros



colegiala and has brothers who are PMA gradu-

ates and military officers.

Both had daughters who suddenly dropped out of school and joined the NPA, if not entirely to their absolute surprise at least to their monumental chagrin. Both knew their daughters had been attending all sorts of meetings and had been expressing themselves vocally, even stridenrity, about the rampant abuses and injustices in their country. Both never expected them to disappear one day, leaving only letters that explained why they did what they did and whose contents could only remind one of the extravagant sentiments of Richard Lovelace's "To Licasta, On Going to the Wars:" "I could not love

thee, Dear, so much/ Loved I not honor more." Paul's daughter was captured in the wilds of the north. Paul spent some time shuttling back and forth there to see to his daughter's welfare and to plead with hardened people whose hearts melted before opera not to harm her. His efforts succeeded; he managed after some time to get his daughter released into his custody with strenuous avowals of making sure she would hew to legally prescribed paths. Maria's daughter was never caught, she surfaced eventually after some time. Both Paul's and Maria's daughters are now married, and though they have not abandoned their revolutionary ideals, they have found other ways to serve the people.

I'm not really sure if that is a case of all's well that ends well. Depends on where you stand, I

t personally would not have known how to deal with something like that if it had happened to me. As I said in a column before, I can only

imagine today the horrendous anxiety we must have put our parents through in our time each time we left home, toothbrush and red books in overnight bags, to disappear for God knows how long (it was seldom overnight). If you can conjure all sorts of things in your mind today when your teenage son or daughter isn't home yet at 2:00 a.m., your parents would have done the same thing about you. And more: Today you know only that at that hour your kid is courting other kids. Then your parents knew you were

courting disaster. All this has only bolstered my conviction about something I said last year. Which is why I am compelled to rage at an age when people expect me to hang my activism like spurs up a wall and go gently into the night. I do not continue to struggle-we, the people who are presumed to have grown older and wiser, do not continue to struggle-our kids will have to do it for us. We do not rise to protest iniquity and stop abuse, our kids will have to do it for us. We do not shed off cynicism and a veteran mentality that says we've done our bit for God and country, we deserve our rest, our kids will risk their lives for us.

Of course, the choice the luds above have made, which is to embrace—and in Erika's case. even die for-a cause that history appears to have discredited, may seem to many of us to be more wasteful than heroic, more foolish than tragic. But if we look beyond the superficial as pects of the cause they embraced to the spark of idealism that underlay it, to the boundless ca parity of youth to bristle at injustice and fight for what is good and decent, to the awesome power of youth to unleash a storm of energy to do what their presumed elders and betters have found every justification not to do, then we must seriously ask ourselves if we are not in some way guilty of their deaths by dereliction of

We do not ask the questions, our kids will ask them for us. We do not live to make a better world for our lads, our lads will die to make one

UPINION

'Hinog sa pilit'

"I SHOULDN'T HAVE DONE IT," DAVID SLAPPED the banana skin on his empty plate, ruing. "It's bland like paper pastel"
"What ... it?" I asked surprised by the sudden

change in his voice and the topic of our conversation over breakfast of canneal and fish pinaksiw, a combination only Filipinos can think of.
"This banana," he pointed to the sickly yellow

peering of locaton on his plate. "I was afraid the whole bunch would be stolen from its trunk, so I cut it down hoping it will ripen soon enough. Now, look at the result!"

I knew all along it would end up still edible, yes, but not pleasant to the palate when he higged it home on a wheelbarrow. It took a month before the slim fingers turned tentatively other in the bowels of a kaing covered with dry banana leaves, plastic sacks and discarded jeans. And when I finally put them on the table, we would go to the refrigerator to look for some other desserts.

The bananas were hinog sa pilit. We could not even offer them to our visitors or give them to departing guests as pabaon. The banames were not only embarrassing to look at, they were insulting to the one you want to give it to.

Sometimes, too, around here, people resort to hinog sa pilit to earn some quick money. Pineapples that appear in off-season months usually get a dose of ethyl, a bould chemical, to force fruiting and another swab on the base of each fruit to ripen it for the market. The fruit may look impressive outside, but the inside is unhealthy yellow with a "bite" in it when eaten to make us refuse

Hinog sa pilit. How like the Charter change being pushed by the administration using what it calls a "people's initiative." This I reflected on as I was taking a brisk walk on my imaginary pathways circling the house that morning. I am part of

COMMENTARY

Evelyn Miranda-Feliciano

that "people" in its "people's initiative," but I cannot find any valid reason for thinking that changing the Constitution now will make life better under this dispensation. What needs changing to my mind is the composition of people holding power at present.

The ingenuousness with which President Macapagal-Arroyo and her hallelujah choir boys came out with Sigaw ng Bayan to solicit the signatures, using the government machinery and money, dearly shows that the move is not from the people but from the government. That in itself kills any creative initiatives people may have

As part of the must, I have the thought of being manipulated by my own government simply because I am regarded as a simpleton and in constant need so I make kapit so patalim. Thus, I can be swayed to put my name on a piece of paper for a few kilos of rice, noodles and sugar. I don't want my government misinforming me that my signature can help change the entire Constitution and form of government when, in fact, the whole exercise has no legal basis for lack of an enabling

I am repulsed by a government that distorts facts and realities to advance its own selfish interests through my signature because it is afraid of its own shadow of shady deals, corrupt practices

and questionable election into office. am outraged by a government that bamboozles me to obedience by martial flats and orders and still disguise itself as a democracy.

The frenzy, the hysterical optimism, the speed with which the so-called "people's initiative" is being rammed into the consciousness of the nation is a desperate attempt by this government to make hinog so pilit, a move that is altogether unripe, out of season, unreasonable, unconstitutional. And anything forced to ripen before its time, before its natural maturity arrives—pineapple or political process—comes out distasteful, disappointing, if not repulsive. Ang hinog so pilit ay mapakla, mapait. Or, it could be, like in poli-

I won't pick any fruit if it's not ripe for the psching again," my husband resolved during breakfast that morning. He stood up. "If it gets stolen, so be it."

He rummaged through the inside of the fridge for something

I smiled to myself, remembering his words as I panted, now about to finish my daily exercise. Would PGMA allow her presidential seat to be "stolen" from her through a real people's mitiative of sustained civil disobedience, perhaps? Like not paying taxes, boycotting certain products and services, OFWs withholding their money, government employees not appearing in their places of work as suggested by a columnist? It was even suggested that priests not hold Masses for the people. This is all to oppose the one up there who claims she is God-sent to be the "best leader" of our time. I really wonder how it could be.

It may not come to that. Or it may, Still, ang hinog sa pilit ay mapakla at mapait.

Evelyn Miranda-Feliciano is now a freelance book writer after 22 years with the Institute for Studies in Asian Church and Culture. She is also a teacher-facilitator in seminars on writing, women, culture and family life

Catherine's story

"CATHERINE" IS THE NAME GIVEN TO ONE OF four women on death row who are the subject of case studies included in "invisible Realities, For-Igotten Voices: The women in death row from a 'gender and rights-based perspective."

Like the 27 other women death penalty convicts at the Correctional Institute for Women (CIW) at the time the research was conducted (mid-2004), Catherine was largely invisible to society. As the study put it: "(The) death penalty is not readily associated with women offenders." This is in part because there is only one woman for every 36 men who languish on death row at the New Billibid

But aside from bringing the stories and situation of the women to public attention, the study, said research coordinator Aida Santos, also seeks to describe the impact of their sentence on the women's self-perception and on their "significant others," especially their spouses/parmers and children. From their findings, the researchers also hoped to "discuss the gender aspects of death penalty, and prison life in general." To this end, Catherine's story might prove useful in tracking the links between a woman's life experience, particularly of abuse, and the "life choices" she makes.

One of the reactors at yesterday's launch of the study, lawyer Richie Ybanes, warned against bringing up childhood physical and sexual abuse as a way of explaining why the women got into conflict with the law. "This might lead to stigmarizing survivors of abuse, not all of whom become criminals,"

And yet, it seems imperative nonetheless to point out how common childhood abuse figures in the life stories not just of the women on death row, but of women in prison, women survivors of abuse and other crimes, and even women in sex work.

Here's Catherine's story.

AT THE TIME the researchers met Catherine, she was one of the newest occupants of the death row dormitory, and one who didn't seem to belong there. She exuded the air and demeanor of a well-educated suburban housewife, which she was before her arrest. The fifth of eight children of a middle-class couple, she is





Rina Jimenez-David

a college graduate and quite articulate in En-

But there is more to Catherine's story than her comfortable circumstances at the time of her arrest. For some reason, Catherine's mother singled her out for abuse in childhood, something that mystified her siblings who were willing to talk with the researchers. Often, Catherme even served as a surrogate for other siblings who had done wrong and would have been meted corporal punishment.

On her 18th birthday party held at home, Catherine was spotted kissing a suitor during a dance, infuriating her mother who then and there confronted her daughter and slapped her in front of the guests. Shortly after, having been shamed publicly, Catherine decided to elope with the suitor, named Jimmy. He eventually moved into their home.

Though she got pregnant by Jimmy, the relationship didn't last. She caught him embroiled in an affair with her own sister. Still, she received little sympathy from her mother, who blamed her for "bringing a snake into the

IT was at this low point in her life that Catherine met Edcel, a friend of an older brother, who, though married with three children, managed to convince Catherine to cohabit with hum.

Aside from her oldest child, Carherine would bear three sons and a daughter by Edoel, and live a comfortable suburban life, keeping house, bringing her children to school and fetching them, and generally centering her existence on her children

Edcel was a good provider early on, but later would falter in his responsibilities as he got more Catherine.

and more involved with drugs. To make ends meet, Catherine engaged in a sideline, selling garments she got un consignment. When enrollment time came, she begged her siblings for financial help.

She also began to suspect that Edgel was getting men bad company, being visited by strangers at odd times of the day, and meeting with them secretly in a room at their home that he kept off-limits to ev-

One day, Catherine woke up later than usual but still managed to bring her children to school. She decided to stop by a fast-food place to pick up some hamburgers for her children. She was approaching the counter when she heard someone call out her name. It turned out to be a man she had seen with Edgel and so decided to follow him out. Once outside, Catherine was dragged to a parked car where two other men were waiting and they all demanded to know where Edcel was.

THE MEN turned out to be undercover agents and it seemed clear to Catherine that Edgel was their real target. Brought to Camp Crame, she was held without ball for nine days after she refused to sign documents shoved in front of her that would have her admitting guilt to drug pos-

Catherine was adamant that she did not know where Edoel was (he had stopped coming home shortly before her arrest) but refused to help police locate him because she was counting on him to look after her children. Edcel was eventually arrested, and her children were parceled out to relatives, including one to Ed-

According to the researchers, Catherine claims to be still confused about why she was meted out the death penalty. When she tried to discuss legal strategy with the private lawyer her sister hired, all he told her was to "cry in front of the judge so he would take pity on you."

But the judge seemed to relish his reputation as a "Judge Bitay" (Hanging Judge) and was even bragging to his friends that after he had sentenced a woman to life, he would sentence another woman soon. "That was me," says

Summer's rituals

THE WEEKEND TYPHOON REMINDED US THAT SUMMER may be ending soon, which means time is running out for that ritual of passage of pagtutuil or male circumcision.

I've written in the past about this practice, mainly to point out that its medical basis has come under question. The American Academy of Pediatrics, for example, issued a statement in 1999 saying the health benefits of the practice "are not compelling enough."

You should have seen the angry feedback I got from readers—mainly men whenever I did a column questioning the need for circumcision. "It's deaner" was the most common argument, to

PINOY Michael L. Tan

which I'd say that you can be circumcised and still be quite, uh, sloppy.

Others argued that circumcision was needed to produce children. To which I would respond that circumcision is not practiced in mainland China so how come we now have more than a billion Chinese? (A side story: Some angry readers asked if I had been cut and I'd say, with a bit of dramatic flair, yes I've been mutilated, as with most Chinese-Pilipinos.)

"Supot" Another popular Filipino belief is that circumcisson is

needed, around puberty, to spur growth. I should share a little story here to refute that argument Many years ago, the NGO I worked with got a Dutch volunteer agriculturist, Michiel, assigned to us. He arrived shortly before summer and promptly noticed all the free circumcision missions being offered. When he asked about this one time, over lunch, the NGO staff explained that an uncircumcised boy would end up bansos or with stunted

Michiel mustered all his Tagalog to protest: "Hindi yan totoo." (That's not true.) The staff broke out in hysterical laughter, realizing Michiel, who was like 6 feet 3 inches, was, as most Dutch go, uncut. And yet the Dutch are said to be the tallest people on earth. Really now, if circumcisson produces tall people, why do we still have to import basketball playlis, some of whom are probably supot.

Supor. Paper bag. Let's face it, we drag our sons to get circumcised to save them from ostracism. The term "supor" stigmatizes people for life, marking them as poor lovers and poor basketball players (not only are they shorter, they're also said to be poor shots). The word is even used to insult people, as in a sign I saw the other week posted on a wall as a warning: "Supot long any umithi dito." (Only the untircumcised will pee here)

The worst is when someone supot passes and naughty friends wrinkle their noses, claiming the poor hygiene waks

HIV/AIDS

Some readers are probably now itching to tell me, hey, what about all these reports now that circumcision can pre-

We need to be a tad careful here. Yes, it's true; medical researchers have found that there generally seems to be fewer HIV infections in countries where circumcisson is practiced In Asia, the lower infection rates have been noted in the "cut league" of countries, which includes the Philippines, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Indonesia (yes) circumciston is part of our pre-colonial Muslim heritage).

Generally, the studies seem to suggest some "protective" effect from circumcision, not just for males but for their female partners. The reduced risk usn't just for HIV/AIDS. In a paper issued last month, the US Agency for International Development noted that circumcision has been known to greatly reduce a man's risk of penile cancer . . . and it also reduces risk of some other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), including chancroid, herpes and syphilis. It eliminates problems such as phimosis (narrow foreskin opening) and balanitis (infected foreskin), and has been shown to significantly reduce the risk of cervical cancer among female partners of circumcised men."

How does this protective effect work? it's interesting that the anti-circumcision camp has argued that uncircumcised males experience more sexual pleasure because the extra skin is sensitive, but now the pro-circumcision camp says the foreskin actually has more "target cells" that attract infectious microorganisms like HIV. The foreskin is also said to be more susceptible to tears and abrasions, which means easier infection by HIV and other microorganisms causing

No magic bullet

Where does this leave us now? USAED is careful in saying "MC" (sigh, Americans probably gave Filipinos this love for acronyms) is not a "magic bullet" and that it "it will not provide full protection against HIV." Rather wryly, USAID also points out that circumcision "will provide little or no protection against urethral STDs such as gonorrhea and Chiamydia (known locally as rulo) and obviously will not prevent unwanted pregnancies."

It's important then to keep repeating that just because Filipinos are "cut" does not mean we're Immune from HIV The HIV epidemic in the Philippines, previously described as "low and slow," is now considered to be "hidden and growing" so we need to continue to be vigilant and to promote a package of prevention methods, including con-

USAID, in fact, warms that there may be a need to have programs of behavioral "disinhibition" among circumcised males who might return to high-risk behavior thinking they're adequately protected by circumcision.

Since circumcision is already being practiced here, I'd go a srep further and look at how we might want to borrow from a program in Kenya, where circumcision, which is practiced as a traditional ritual, now integrates preventive health educa-

In the Philippines, circumcision is only one of summer's rituals of passage. It used to be that after young men had recovered from circumcision, their older male relatives would bring them to a brothel for their "buyng," a second more profane form of baptism.

Times have changed and we should be rethinking thek rituals. Circumcision may be a good time to explain that the passage from boyhood to manhood isn't just a matter of be ing brave during the curting ritual, or of going off to conquer

women in brothels There is a folk belief that the circumcised male should "protect" his wares from the female gaze, lest this swell are redden like tomatoes. That belief could well be used to ex plain that manhood is a matter of learning to be responsible

and of respecting women Tomato metaphors ande, I've found in the Philippines that it's especially useful to remind young men to see, in every woman, their own mother or sister. That kind of thinking may yet be a more effective preventive action against HIV/AIDS and STDs than circumcision.

Caves for Aguinaldo's camp?

HERITAGE MONTH IS UNDERWAY AGAIN, AND I recently joined a tour of Bulacan organized by Bambi Harper, Mita Rufino and Chichi Salas that brought me back to Biak-na-Bato. I had gone there twice before, ages ago, with Benedict Anderson when it was reportedly swarming with NPAs. Afterwards, I took some graduate students there on a field trip as I was teaching a class on the Philippine Revolution, knowing there was no better way to make them learn than bringing them to a place where the visual aids are literally larger than life. None of us had come prepared to trek all the way to the "Bat Cave," also known as "Bahay Paniki." Worse, we did not know that we needed swim wear. So I put my wallet in a plastic bag and waded waist deep in the water just to get an idea of what Emilio Agumaldo and his men had to go through. It was an experience none of us will easily forget.

' I was informed that there is a very long cave or tunnel with water that is worth exploring. I'm hoping that either Environment Secretary Angelo Reyes (because the area is a DENR-protected nature reserve) or Bulacan Gov. Josie de la Cruz will provide me with a guide and a banca so I can see whether these caves were worth hiding in during

the Philippine Revolution of 1896. When you look at the map, Biak-na-Bato is very close to Manila and you may wonder why Aguinaido took refuge there. But when you make the trip today in a car and on uneven roads, you will understand why. The mountain range is beautiful and the area is still practically uninhabited today, so a century and 10 years ago, this was

a suitable place for hiding. The Heritage group from Manila had been given only 15 minutes in Biak-ne Bato, so we went through the paved concrete trail to the mouth of one cave. The guide said this was where Aguinaldo hid in 1896. Everyone tried to peer inside but could not see through the dark and we wondered why he would hade in a dark and damp cave.





Photos of Aguinaldo's camp in Biak-na-bato show that they had huts made of bamboo and thatch. We have to determine where this used to be located instead of perpetuating the legend that Aguinaldo and company hid in the labyrinth of caves. After one visit to Biak-na-Bato, common sense will tell you that nobody lived in the caves for extended periods, but then as I keep reminding my students, "common sense is not com-

There are a number of primary sources on Biak-na-bato and, of course, the most famastic of these is the book by Pedro Alejandro Paterno who described his arrival there as follows:

"We reached the pinnacle of Bıyak-na-Bato crowned with huts that housed the troops and the people who sought refuge on its slopes. It was eleven in the evening. The nocturnal birds sang and whistled in the virgin forest. Somehow or the other, some lights flickered inside the already

"Hurriedly and without losing a moment, we directed our steps to the hut occupied by the Filipino chief and his wife, "Don Emilio Aguinaldo received me affectionately and lodged me in his dwelling hut. It was so miserable and parrow. He and his wife were not using this as their room but they were sleeping on the papag

"They gave me a small room in which I had to draw my feet together. The sister of Aguinaldo, Neneng, wery hardworking lady, the sort of proud and virile type, yet affable and loving, together with her aged mother were in charge of

giving me lodging. They kept me warm from the intense cold. They gave me pieces of paper and a soldier's clothes—the only things available. All was done for God and peace. I fixed myself the best way I could, I tried to sleep, preparing my plans for the conference the next day since I would have to be an arbiter on the subject of peace, but it was impossible to sleep.

There was a continuous neighing of horses and buzzing of insects that molest and hite. Finally I opened my eyes and seemed to fly, fly and fly to the monorhythmic sound of the black and stringent hawks and kalaws, of the dismal ticric, of the owls and sabucots of the virgin forest. They protested in continuous and mournful savage cries over the encroachment of man, the guerilleros who were disturbing their eternal calm and paradistacal tranquility."

Reading this is a bit difficult not only because of the florid run-around style that we do not employ in English, but in 19th-century Spanish that is how that generation sounded. Paterno painted a very pretry picture of this virgin forest, and I wonder if all the birds he mentioned are still there today. The entrance to the reserve is now filled with little stalls selling souvenirs, soft drinks and snacks. On the trail, you will meet children asking for money or candy. The place is still quite beautiful and during the summer, it can he a very refreshing swimming hole with the cool mountain water exscading through the meks that literally are split open, hence "blak-na-bato."

Re-reading the sources now makes me wonder about the flat stone formation that people claim was Aguinaldo's table, and if the cave where it can be found was Agumaldo's headquarters. Sorry to disappoint the tourism people, but none of the sources mentions the caves-only a camp with makeshift houses. Definitely this requires more research.

Comments are welcome at accumpo@ate-



Making a scapegoat out of the Charter

the Philippines ranked 49th out of 61 countries in global competitiveness, the Switzerland-based Institute for Management Development did not say that among the causes of this deplorable performance is our present Constitution or some of its provisions. ("RP rates poorly in competitiveness survey, PDI, 5/12/06) In fact, Mia Denopol, project manager for Global Competitiveness Program, cited as reason the Philippines' poor ratings in education, health, research and development, infrastructure, credit rating, political instability, corruption, brain drain, weak civil service and poor gover-

Neither have foreign institutions like the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and Asian

IN REPORTING THAT IN 2005 Development Bank blamed the... present Constitution for our extreme poverty and dismal economic performance. Yet the Arroyo administration and her Charter change advocacy groups, in cluding Sigaw Ng Bayan, continue to proclaim ad nauseam that what's wrong with our country ig our Constitution.

It is obvious that the Arroyo ad D ministration is making the Constitution a scapegoat for its failure to improve the economy and stop the spread of hunger, sickness, etc. In its obsession to stay in power, the Arroyo administration seeks to ac debi quire legitimacy through a dubi ous piebiscite and chooses to turo a blind eye on the real problems of OUR COURTY.

MANUELR ALMARIO, 2d mfalmario@yahoo.com

Morality play on Marcos wealth

THE INOUIRER'S APRIL 30 EDItorial asked: Has the Presidential Commission on Good Government lost completely its sense of right and wrong?

PCGG Chair Camilo Sabio "defied" the senators in that legislative hearing precisely because his sense of right and wrong told him that they could be fishing for something for anything—they could pillosy President Macapagal-Arroyo with. It was wrong for the senators to turn budget hearings into opportunities for head-bashing, it was right for Sabio to shield the President from legislative malevolence now gone customary. If anything, a solid sense of right and wrong marked the refusal of Sabio to answer questions dipped in malice, notwithstanding proud hous roaring.

The editornal likewise accused me of "going around town proudly trumpeting" my exploratory talks with the Marcoses. I was, of course, being transparent, informing the public from the very start what was going on, "Proudly trumpeting" was the preferred semanucs, in keeping with your chosen slant

While journalistic license might allow newspapers unlimited latitude in labeling anything, they must always be right with their

The Incorren was dead wrong in claiming there were "talks with the Marcoses for a 70-30 sharing." There are exploratory talks, there will be sharing one way or the other but no one is talking about 70-30.

I bet the Inouteer quoted the astonishing Eddie Gil-with triumphal glee when he said he would pay off our national debt

win the presidential elections of 2004. The editorial took me to task for likewise quoting Imelda, who happened to have made the same offer. The Inquiren is free to quote others, PCGG commissioners had better watch out-that apparently, is its take on the matter.

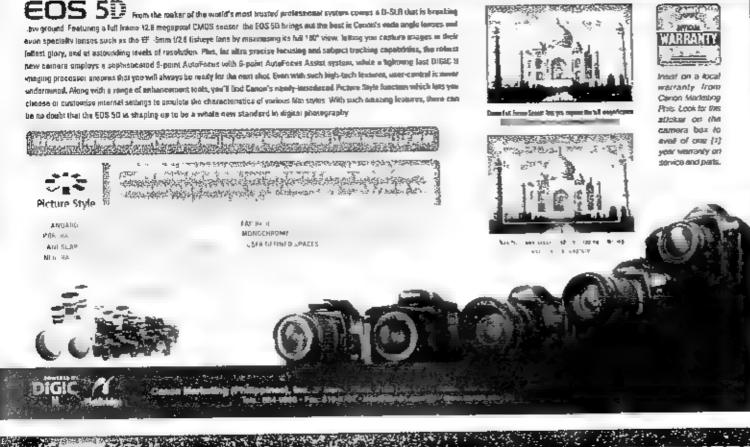
On the report that I said "I don't care about the moral issues inc volved," instead of demonstrating how the inquires quoted me out of context, let me just remind the newspaper that in its passionate fight for press freedom, it avers pretty much the same thing: "We will give media space to coup protters and other so-called destabilizers so they can be heard by the public in the free marketplace of ideas. We don't care about the moral issues involved."

Indeed, when a newspaper raises up a murror to the world, that murror can only be an unusualty amoral one-not immoral, mind you, but amoral. There should be occasions when bracketing morasty could be a most proper moral act.

Lastly, the Inquiren selectively quoted the 1998 Supreme Court decision on one particular compromise agreement to suit its purpos es. The manner in which it quoter and interpreted that ruing has been self-serving and decentful as any legal mind trained in reading court decisions will readily affirm Now that's one moral issue for the newspaper

---RICARDO ABCEDE commussioner, Presidential Commission on Good Government IRC Bidg., 82 Edsa) Mandaluyong City\

Commissioner Abcede admits eving





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6 out of 10 cops don't own homes

CAMP OLIVAS, PAMPANGA—SOME 73,000, OR 62 percent, of policemen in the country do not have houses and lots of their own.

"They either rent or live with their relatives," said Deputy Director Genera. Oscar Calderon, PNP deputy chief for administration and chair of the PNP housing board.

Calderon said the PNP had tapped the Gawad Kalinga to he.p ease the housing problem among policemen and their families. It launched on Monday in Tarlac City the first of 48 areas for

the "Pulis Kahnga" program Gawad Kalinga has helped

build thousands of decent and affordable homes in poor urban and rural communities, mobilizing the labor and financial contributions of private individuals and corporations as well as public agencies.

Gawad Kaunga founder Tony Meloto joined Vice President Noli de Castro, concurrent chair of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council, in Monday's capsule-laying rites in a 62-hectare housing site in Barangay Macabulos.

signed to various stations in Central Luzon will initially benefit from the project.

Calderon said Tarlac Rep. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III pledged P3.2 maltion to the project. The money would come from the lawmaker's countryside development fund.

Local governments in Tarlac, Calderon said, committed to pay for the costs of renting construction equipment. Each single detached, 20-

square meter unit costs P60,000. Calderon said Gawad Kalinga agreed to shoulder half of the

amount. Pohoemen would pay the

government-owned Pag-Ibig Fund.

De Castro urged policemen to therish "with the same fervor" the housing privilege given them by the government and the private sector.

He said that while government was prioritizing the bousing needs of squatters, such as those living along the right-of way of the PNR North and South imes, the housing sector was also focusmg on the same needs of the government sector, particularly the low-satarred employees.

Under the Institutional Housing Program of the government, priority is given to teachers, soldiers,

At least 200 policemen as- other half through a loan from the policemen, and LGU employees.

That is why you should treasure this benefit. If there are reguirements needed, let's work on it. If there are payments to be made, let's pay them That is all for your family," said De Castro.

De Castro said the housing project for policemen was a concept. of the PNP, through its personnel housing assistance program, with the help of the Gawad Kannga

The construction of 50 housing units will be sponsored by the Gawad Kalinga, in cooperation with the local government of Tarlac, the PNP and the National Housing Authority

The Armed Forces of the

Philippines Savings and Loans Association Inc. (AFPSLAI) will donate P6 million for the construction of 200 more housing units that would cost P60,000 per urut. Also, an additional P30,000 per beneficiary would be available from the Public Safety Mutual Benefit Financial Institution (PSMBFI)

De Castro also lauded non-government organizations (NGOs), such as the Gawad Kalinga, which have been giving assistance to the government in building shelters for squatters. Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk and Cynthia Balana in Manila

ROUNDUP

Smuggled Korean cars held

DAVAO CITY-Customs authorities here on Thursday opened two container vans and found smuggled Korean cars. Sigmund Barte, inventory officer of the Bureau of Gustoms, said they seized the containers in January on suspicion their contents were not properly declared. He said the shipper declared the contents of the containers as auto parts. Barte said after the seizure, the BOC contacted the consignee, Bungs One Auto Supply but its owners disowned the shipment. Barte said when it was opened on Thursday, they found three KIA Sportage vehicles and a Hyundai van

Dennis Jay Santos, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Symposium on disabilities

THE FIRST Southern Tagalog Symposium on Developmenta, Disab lities will beheld on Thursday and Friday at the Believus Manila in Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang, Muntinulupa City. Hosted by the First Steps Intervention and Therapy Center, Irea based in Nayong Maharlike, Calamba City and held in cooperation with the Alpha Angelicum Academy of Biñan, Laguna, the symposium will tacke the issue "AD/HD: Multidimensional and Mustidisciplinary Issues and Perspectives." For inquiries, call (049) 545-6479 or 0928-422-6117, or e-mail firststeps, itc@yahoo.com.

Hospital donates medicines

COTABATO CITY—A private hospita, based in Tokyo, Japan has offered over P3 million worth of medicines for Muslim communities in war-tom areas in Mindanao. The donation will be used for medical missions in the provinces at Basilan, Davao Oriental, Lanao dei Norte, Sultan Kedarat and Zamboanga dei Sur by the Bangsamoro Development Agency (BDA), the designated development arm of the Moro Islam)c Liberal on Front Officials said the medicines were provided by Tokushukar Medical Corp., the largest chain of privately owned hospitals in Japan. The first leg of the medical mission was held in Sapad, Matanog on May 10

Jeoffrey Maitem, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Albay seeks IRA recovery

LEGAZPI CITY—Provincial board member Ramon Fernandez un has initiated a move to recover Albay's share in the P17 5 billion internal Revenue Aiforment (IRA) withheld by the national government under exiPresident flamos in 2000 to 2001. Following the Suprame Court ruling that declared the IRA cut unconstitutional, Fernandez flied a resolution authorizing Gov. Fernando Gonzalez to enter into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) seeking the release of the IRA through the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) without the need for another appropriation in the national Edgar Alejo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

6 dead in truck collision

PAGADIAN CITY-At least six people died and four others injured when two trucks collided along the national highway in Autoral Zamboanga del Sur on early Sunday, Zamboanga del Sur police chief Supt. Ramon Ocholorena said the fatailties were aboard a Pagad an bound six wheeler Eil truck that crashed into a 10-wheeler soft drinks cargo truck in Barangay Anonang around 7 a.m. Ochotorena said the E.f truck tried to overtake another vehicle before colliding with the cargo truck on the opposite lane "The six-wheeler truck turned furtle before ramming a parked tricycle," he

Ochotorena said the driver and three passengers of the 10 wheeler truck were senously injured and were immediately brought to the Aurora General Hospital

Aurora police chief Chief Inspector Robert Bahian said they had dif ficulty retrieving the dead bodies because these were trapped by the crumpled meta, parts of the ill fated vehicle. Bahian said they had to use acceylene torches to retrieve the mang ed bod es of the victims, all Michael Sarcauga, PDI Mindanao Bureau of them male.

7. more added to 'Caloy' death toll in Sorsogon

A teacher starts cleaning her classroom at the Fiedad Central Elementary School in Toril, Davao City in preparation for class opening next month.

SEVEN MORE PEOPLE DIED IN Sorsogon in the wake of tropical storm "Caloy," authorities said, as the government of Oriental Mindoro placed the province in a

state of calamity. Police said five fishermen from Bagatao Island in Magallanes Sorsogon were confirmed dead Two were found dead in Sta. Magdalena town, some 70 km southwest of Sorsogon City.

Caesar Tailada, Orienta, Mindoro provincia, disaster coordinating council official, said 24,207 families were affected by the typhoon.

He said the hardest hit town was Pinamalayan where more than 1,200 families were moved

to evacuation centers.

Almost 500 famules are in evacstation centers in Calapan, he said. He said the provincial council gave Gov. Arnan Panaligan permission to use the province's P10

million calamity fund. The storm destroyed at least P50 milion in crops, said Tallada, but the destruction could be worth

much more as reports come in. At least 1.500 houses were destroyed while 2,000 others suf-

fered damages. Power was restored in some parts of Calapan but the rest of the

province is still without electricity. Tallada said it would take at least a week to restore power.

been cleared and are now open to

Batangas City and the coastal towns of Tingloy and Mabini have declared a state of calamity in their areas.

Armando Duque, director of the Office of Civil Defense in Calabarzon, said at least P150 million in infrastructure and crops were destroyed in Batangas.

Members of the Badjao and Dumagat tribes were moved to the city's public market and the Libho Elementary School

Mabini town in Batangas re-

ported losses of P168 million. The two dead in Barangay Biton

He said most of the roads have in Sta. Magdalena, Sorsogon were trying to salvage their fishing boar when they were battered by strong winds and waves, authorities said.

Sta. Magdalena Mayor Alejandro Gamos reported to the Provincial Disaster Coordinating Council (PDCC) that at least P3.5 million in crops were destroyed in his town.

Noel Pura, PDCC action officer, asked other mayors in Sorsogon to submit reports to the council for compilation and record-keeping. These, he said, would be submitted to the regional disaster coordinating council and the national disaster coordinating council. Marton Ramos, Bobby Labalan and Ephraim Agialar, PDI Southern Luxon Bureau

Court stops signature verification process lauded the court decision By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.

and Felipe V. Celino PDI Visayas Bureau

ROXAS CITY-OPPONENTS OF moves to amend the Constitution have scored a major victory after a Capiz court barred Commission on Election (Comelec) officials from verriving collected signatures of registered voters for a people's initiative

In a two page order released on May 15, Judge Edward Contreras, of the Roxas City Regional Tria. Court (RTC) Branch 17, issued a prelim nary prohibitory miunction against the Comelec director in Western Visayas and officials of the poll body in Capiz

The order effectively prevents the election officials from proceeding with the authentication of signatures indefinitely or until the main case, the petition for prohibition, is resolved.

Contreras issued the preliminary injunction after the lapse of a 20 day temporary restraining order that he ssued last April 25.

Citing the importance of the case, Contreras exempted the petinoner from paying the injunction bond. Opponents of the initiative

"This is a major victory for those seeking to block these self-serving and malicious moves to amend the Constitution," said Hope Hervilla, regional coordinator of the partyast group Bayan Muna.

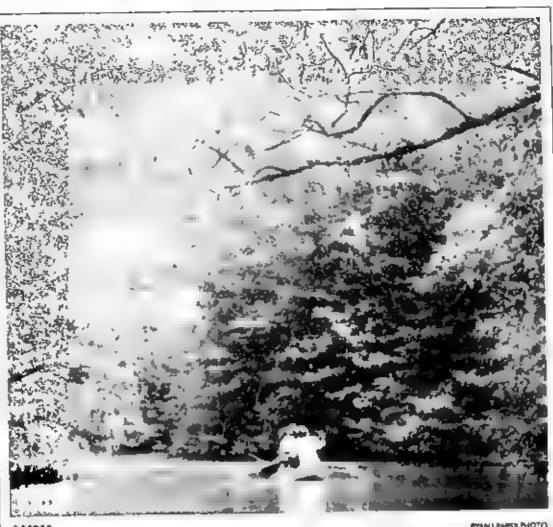
In his order, Contreras said the preliminary prohibitory injunction was necessary "in the interest of justice and four play and in order not to render ineffectual the judgment in the main case of prohibition."

Contreras also said in his order that the petitioner was entitled to the infunction based on evidence and arguments presented by both sides.

The ione penuoner, former Roxas City councilor Rey Antonio Jose Altavas, accused the Comelec officials of violating the March 1997 Supreme Court ruling "Sannago vs Cornelec."

The decision ruled that Republic Act 6735, or the In trative and Referendum Act of 1989, lacks an enabling law to support a people's initiative to amend the Charter.

The respondents argued that the pet noner should have first availed of administrative remedies with the Comelec before filing the case in the RTC.



LUSH Lush vegetation avaits visitors to the mangrove forest of Sakang near the Bambus Nature Park Resort in Paktwan.

Cagayan town mayor nabbed for murder

TUGUEGARAO CITY POLICE ON Monday arrested a Cagayan mayor charged with double murder last year, on the strength of a warrant issued by a Manua judge

Senior Supt. James Andres Melad, Cagayan pobce director, said Buguey Mayor Liceno Antiporda Jr. was taken to Metro Manua to face charges involving the murtler of lawyer Franklin Tamargo and his daughter, Frunciei Gall, in Manda last year.

Antiporda was arrested on the strength of a warrant issued by Judge Zenaida Daguna of the Maniia regiona, trial court. Meiad said.

He said Antiporda did not resist arrest. The mayor's son, Buguey Vice Mayor Lloyd Anniporda, who was also im-

plicated in the killings, is at large. Melad has allowed two police teams led by Senior Insp. Romeo Mangwag Buguey ponce chief to escort the police convoy that took

Antiporda to Metro Mamia. Melad ordered Mangwag to send a security team to the Buguey town hall to defuse any tension that mught result from the arrest of Antiporda Villamor Visaya Ja, PDI N. Luzon Burcou





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The entry should be delivered to MEDICard Philippines, Inc. 9/F World Center Bidg., Sen. Gil Puyat Ave. Makati City 1209 by May 30, 2006, to qualify. The entry should be enclosed in a short brown cavelops with the words "MEDICard Essay Writing Contest/Philippine Daily Inquirer" prominently written in front.

The entry should be mailed to MEDICard Philippines, Inc. 9/F World Center Bldg., Sen. Gil Puyat Ave, Makati City 1209. The entry should have a postmark dated May 25, 2006 or earlier and should reach the MEDICard office by June 3, 2006 to qualify. The words "MEDICard Essay Writing Contest/Philippine Daily Inquirer" should be prominently written at the back.

The entry must be e-mailed to essays@medicardphils.com by May 30, 2006 to qualify. The subject must indicate "Essay Writing Contest-Philippine Dally Inquirer".

6. Entrants may choose any of the following topics:

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b. What services should a healthcare provider offer to make it effective and significant to me?

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8 Winners will be announced on the June 9, 2006 issue of Philippine Daily Inquirer

* Total prizes for all winners

**Membership may be transferable if winner is already an existing cardholder.



MEDICard, the healthcare I deserve!

GUINSAUGON, now buried under tons of mud, rocks and debris, has drawn the sympathy of donors from various countries, including Filipino immigrants in the United States. **Donations keep** pouring in for buried village

By Joey A. Gabieta PDI Visayas Bureau

PALO, LEYTE-FInancial assistance for victims of the designed to address massive landshde in the immediate needs Barangay saugon, St. Bernard town in Southern landslide which cov-Leyte keeps pouring

A US-based Filipino organization vesterday nanoed two checks amounting to \$10,500 (roughly P535,500) to the Department of Education in Visayas Eastern

Guin-Project saugon. Tabang Ka-

The project was of students who survived the Feb., 17 ered the village of about 1,000 people

ders. Flor Velasco Villania, one of the trustees of the Waray Waray Association of Tidewater (WWT) based in Virginia Beach, Virginia, handed checks worth \$6,000 from the Mission of Mercy (MoM) and \$4,000

from the Council of Filipino Organizations of Tidewater (Cufot) to DepEd Regional Assistant Director Alberto Escobarte and project coordinator Rebecca finish

The WWT is part of the Cufot, Villama was asked by the MoM to personally hand their donation to the DepEd officials.

The were expected to benefit 103 students, 18 of whom would be entering college. The other students are in the elementary and high school levels.

Leo Dizon, 17, one of the beneficiaries, said he was happy that the government and private groups were not getting tired of ings. helping the children of Gumsaugon

™ wili always be grateful to them. Now, I can be assured that somehow I can finish my college education," he told the be accounted for," Est INQUIRER.

Dizon completed his high school education in March at the Tambis National High School in St. Bernard. He plans to take maritime courses because he wanted to become a seafarer.

He lost his mother Jocelyn and five siblings, including his 3-

based here for its month-old brother, in the tragedy. The DepEd took him in for a summer job, which ended Mon

Villania, a native of Palo, Leyte, said they were swept with sadness upon learning what happened to Guing with mad and boul- saugon. They de cided to think of ways of helping the

On April 22, the WWT sent five boxes containing ciothing and canned goods through the Streetight Philippines, a charitable ofganization based in Tacloban City

Villania said the financial assistance extended by the group and the MoM was meant to help student-survivors so they could education and have "normal productive and lives."

"Thank goodness, there were also responsive, generous people who wanted to do the same. That donations is why this was realized," Villania said 🥸

She said another \$4,000 would be donated soon to Proj ject Guinsaugon by the Cufot "pending positive feedback on their initial donas tion" and \$8,000 was also allocated by the Mission of Mercy to be used for the construction of .two school build-

Escobarte and Ragi rag gave assurance that the donations would be used in act cordance with the project's objectives.

"Everything will cobarte said.

The DepEd has received P800,000 from different organizations and individuals since the project was launched on March

were deposited in the Land Bank of the Philippines.

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Editor Jun Bandayrel Bureau Chief Rolando B. Fernandez

Meet Tarlac's 'Calendar King'

By Russell Arador Tariac City

DRIVER EEPNEY Efren Batuang of Barangay Carangian in Tarlac City was in Grade 4 when he stopped going to school because of poverty

Despite his lack of education, he can perform mathematical calculations in his head so fast that he can put an engineer, an accountant or a math teacher to

Batuang, for example, can mentally multiply a three-digit number by another three-digit number, churning out the correct answer even before you can say, "I give up."

The catch, however, is that he can do the mind-boggling feat only if the multiplicand is 365. Why? It is the total number of days in a year and thus a "calendar number," said Batuang, who can also perform a host of other tricks involving the Gregorian càlendar

For his unique talent, Batdang, now 64, is called the "Calendar King" by friends, relatives and neighbors.

Among other things, Tatang Efren, as this father of nine is fondly called, can give the name of the week on which a particular date falls.

In a heartbeat, he can also count the number of days from Jan. 1, 1901 up to any given date within the 20th century.

Before the Inquirer visited Baruang, we randomly selected "April 19, 1980," "Oct. 29, 1985" and "June 19, 1983 " To determine the day of the week on which these dates feil, we ilsed the date settings program Bf Windows XP

When shown these dates, Batuang, without using a reference, correctly and promptly answered Saturday, Tuesday and Sunday.

Simply put, just tell him your birth date and he will know in a second what day of the week you were born.

That was easy, he said. Indeed, he had many other more difficult tricks up his sieeve.

and the day of the week, he can fell the month or months in which this particular date belongs.

Calendar tricks

For instance, if shown the folinformation-24, This means that in 1966 only had the 24th day falling on a Thursday.

Batuang said it was towards division.



BATUANG holding a copy of the century calendar

the end of the 1970s when, as a eepney driver in Metro Manila, he met a college student who amused his friends with his calendar tricks

His interest piqued, he began to study the numbers, dates and other pieces of information in the calendar.

It did not take long for him to realize that what the college guy was doing-identifying the day of the week based on a complete date-was simple. In fact, he said, it was the simplest calendar trick.

But he learned this the hard

In the 1990s, he auditioned to join a "Calendar King" contest sponsored by a national television network.

"I was asked to name the day of the week for a number of dates. Very quickly, I was able to do it. But the young man in charge of interviewing me simply told me I did not make it. I asked him why. He said I was slow and that was it," Batuang

The rejection did not discourage him, though. On the contrary, it spurred him to develop better and more difficult tech mques. "Lato akong nagpursigi (I tried harder)," he said.

Batuang also invented a system to translate all the information in a calendar into numbers and arrange these into a table.

The table, he added, was not As another example, given much different from a calendar, Snly the numerical day, the year except that it contained only numbers. No names of weeks or months, only numbers

Each time he would answer a question posed before him, he would simply visualize the table of numbers he had constructed

What Batuang was able to Thursday, 1966-he will very create was impressive not only quickly identify the months of because it worked but also be-February, March and November. cause it was made by someone whose math training did not go February, March and November beyond the four basic operations in arithmetic-addition, subtraction, multiplication and

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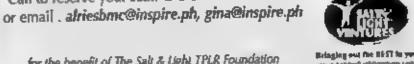


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Team from OIC to check peace pact enforcement



manghisee:

gation from the influential Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) will arrive in the country today to assess the unplementation of the 1996 final peace agreement between the government and the Moro National Liberation Front urday. (MNLF), a Malacafiang official announced yesterday.

COTABATO CITY-A 16-MEMBER DELE- said the OIC team would be flying to Min- in order. danao tomorrow and would be visiting the cities of Marawi, Cotabato and Davao, as well as the provinces of North Cotabato and

Dureza said the government was con-

Historic event

"The visit is truly another historic event as we continue to keep track of the full implementation of the government's commitments in the GRP-MNLP peace agreement," Dureza

He said the visit was "timely and rele-

the ongoing negotiations between the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF)."

The visit is also seen as a boost to the government's bid for an observer status with the OIC, the S7-member pan-Islamle body that includes oil-rich Saudi Ara-

But Eid Kabalu, MILF spokesperson, said the government's bid faces rough sailing because Saudi Arabia itself opposed the inclusion of the Philippines into the group-

Observer seat

During President Macapagal-Ara royo's recent visit to the oil rich country, she asked King Abdullah to help the country win in its bid for an observer seat, which the MNLF continues to

Kabalu did not specify where the MILF information come from but added that aside from Saudi Arabía, Malaysia is also opposed to the Philippines' bid.

If Kabalu's claim is true, then the country's bid could fail according to political analysts

Saudi Arabia holds the presidency of the OIC's Committee of the Eight, which oversees the 1996 peace agreement.

The committee also includes Brunei, Malaysia, Senegal, Somalia, Libya, Indonesia and Bangladesh.

Another candidate

Kabalu said that even the MILF, which has also been seeking an observer seat in the OIC, was opposed to the government's

"We have asked the OIC to put it on hold first because the peace talks are going on," he

Dureza refused to comment on Kabalu's

"I will check on it first. It's so difficult to give statements on sensitive issues," he

Kabalu also accused the government of not fully implementing its 1996 agreement withthe MNLE

He cited the complaints aired by senior MNLF leaders in the past, including MNLF

Misuari is in Jail following a failed uprising by his disgruntled followers in Sulu and Zamboanga that killed more than 100 people. Jeoffrey Maltem and Jeffrey Tupas, PDI Mindanao Bureau

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children and their parents.

It was expected to complete its task by Sat-

fident that the OIC team would find the Jesus Dureza, national peace adviser, implementation of the peace agreement want as it sets an encouraging mode in

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PHINMA Property Holdings Corporation Inaugurates Italian-Inspired Community

After completing the fastest-selling affordable development in Metro Manila, PHINMA Property Holdings Corporation (PPHC) inaugurates its Spazio Bernardo project in Quezon City today.

mobilization. It was launched September last year and the first batch of buyers started moving into the first Villa of a 116 units just three months after, making it in time to spend the New Year in their new dream

The 1.6-hectare property was sold and delivered in less than nine months from home. With PPHC's building system, Spazio Bernardo was completed in record time without sacrificing structural integrity and quality.

Spazio Bernardo is an Italian-inspired medium-rise condominium development near a so Avenue in Quezon City just 8 minutes away from the MRT EDSA North terminal. It is composed of 957 units in 11 buildings called Villas. Spazio is the Italian word for "place" or "space". Rightfully so, Spazio-Bernardo is a residential enclave in the city amidst charming landscaped gardens.

It is a community setting that is affordable and accessible to major malls, schools, hospitals, government institutions, parks and other commercial centers. Its location allows its residents to be close to their place of work, experience reduced travel time and spend more quality time with their families.

Spazio Bernardo's il Palazetto Beckons



With Spazio Bernardo completed in record time, PHINMA Property Holdings Corporation (PPHC) formally opens the doors of il Palazetto, the main clubhouse that offers its residents a place to socialize, relax and workout amudst the newly completed community.

Il Palazetto is centrally located within the landscaped quadrangle of the 1.6 hectare development. As you step into its entrance porch, the high sloping ceiling lends airiness and a feel of simple pleasures. It is perfect for social functions and has a spillover area to a beautifully landscaped park. The park's free flowing

pattern of jogging paths beckons the discerning urbanite to soak in the lush greenery and offers residents a place to relax. Quaint benches and lamps heighten the charm of the amenities area and complement the Italian-inspired architecture.

For those who want to keep fit and trim, il Palazetto also offers a gym where residents can do their workout routines. Rounding out the activities for the family, the amenities area features a playground where children can enjoy the day in a safe and secure surrounding. Il Palazetto and the park balance the concept of condominium lifestyle in the metropolis by making the community a complete urban refuge.

Who would have thought that one can get all these features in affordable housing?

Despite being sold for as low as P640,800.00 for a spacious 30-sqm. unit, Spazio Bernardo offers features that are not typical of projects in

this price level. Each unit comes with Australian aluminum windows, vinyl floor tiles on self-leveling concrete, prepainted walls and ceiling, tiled toilet and bath, under kitchen cabinets and drying cages in the attic.

Spazio Bernardo also owes its success to the partnership with government. HUDCC under the leadership of its Chairman and Philippune Vice President Noli L. De Castro, Pag-IBiG Fund under its President and CEO, Atty. Federico Romero S. Quimbo and to its joint development partner; the Quezon City LGU headed by Mayor Feliciano Belmonte, Jr. This partnership has belied make decent and quality homes within the reach of the Filipino family.

-- PPHC is an award-winning and leading developer of affordable medium-rise housing in Metro Manila and Spazio Bornardo stands as its contribution to the PHINMA Group's 50th enniversary this year. Bannezed by its slogan "City Living Made Easy", PPHC communities are perfect for those who have set their sights on making their home in Metro Manila, close to their place of work. PPHC's projects are specially designed to be owned at a very affordable price and driven ever forward by its belief that Life Can Be



Senate, House OK dialogue on Cha-cha

and widespread opposition from civic, religious and business groups, the administration in the past several weeks has begun raising the possibility of transforming the Senate and the House of Representatives into a constituent assembly that will revise the Constitution.

The Senate has refused to support either the people's mitiative or the constituent assembly. The House believes that it could overcome the Senate opposition if the two chambers vote to convene themselves into a constituent assembly. The Senate believes thus can only happen if the two houses, voting separately, approve the proposal.

If the House insists on its interpretation of the Constitution on the second mode of amending the Charter voting as one unit, the Senate says it will contest this before the Supreme Court.

'Nothing will happen'

The Gordon-Jaraula dialogue was proposed by Speaker Jose de Venecia to break the impasse.

alogue ... but whether or not we will proceed with Charter change is another thing altogether," said Senate Majority Leader Francis

"Whether or not such a dialogue will lead to a Con-ass (constitutional assembly) or to Chacha (Charter change) is something that remains to be seen."

Sen. Joker Arroyo said the dialogue would be nothing but "bolahan," or fooling around.

"Nothing will happen to that dialogue because the issues are so complicated," Arroyo said.

The Supreme Court will be the one to resolve the issue of whether the Senate and the House should vote as one or separately, Arroyo said

Breakthrough

But Sen. Edgardo Angara, who supports the President's initiative, said the dialogue was a "tremendous breakthrough for constitutional change."

"So far, there has been a retrogressive and war-like stance on

"We agreed to sit down and di-now, the barrier has been brought down considerably."

> Malacañang and administration allies said yesterday's meeting saw the restoration of "diplomatic ties," as well as goodwill," not only between the two branches but between the two legislative chambers after months of bickering over political controversies hounding Ms Arroyo.

| | priority bills

The meeting agreed to push 11 priority bills in the remaining ses-

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye later told reporters that the 11 measures included the 2006 national budget, the antiterror bill, the bio-ethanol bill, tax relief for low-income workers, the rationalization of fiscal incentives, antismuggling bill, the bill on the Bases Conversion Development Authority ecozones incentives, the Tourism Policy Act, the creation of the Credit Information Bureau, the automated election system bill, and the bill extending either side," Angara said. "At least Agricultural Competitive En-

Burrye said the major accomplishment was the deal on the Charter change dialogue. We're very happy that both houses agreed to send their respective committee chairmen to this meeting and we're looking forward to a very productive dialogue."

Ms Arroyo's political adviser, Gabriel Claudio, said the senators who attended the meeting were open to some amendments to the 1987 Constitution but that what they were objecting to was the procedure suggested by the House that it could convene the constituent assembly without the

Meeting to iron out kinks

Jaraula, who attended Bunye's briefing, said he and Gordon agreed to start meeting today "in good faith" to "iron out kinks in the approaches available toward Charter change and, primarily, to agree first to what things are doable and what can be agreed

Gordon said that among the issues that the two committees big, big push."

would tackle was the question of "appropriate timing" to hold discussions on the proposal to convene Congress into a constituent assembly "or if we are going to meet as a constituent assembly."

'After we have gone with the rules, (we can tackle) what are the amendments that we can agree on," he said

Asked whether he meant the Senate had now agreed with the House to convene Congress into a constituent assembly, Gordon said: "No, we only agreed to meet as committees to find out what are the things we can agree upon and then move on after that."

Senate has not softened

Asked whether the dialogue managed to break the impasse between the Senate and the House regarding Charter change, Gordon said: "It breaks the name calling, the backbiting, and we can start talking again in terms of what we can do and that's important, that's a

In an interview with Senate reporters later, Drilon denied that the senators had "softened" on the issue of Charter change. It was Malacafiang, he said, that had backtracked.

Drilon said Ms Arroyo did not refer to the people's initiative during the meeting.

He said the President had ap-1 parently accepted the Senate's position that such an initiative was "patently :llegal" because of the lack of an enabling law for its umplementation.

Speaker De Venecia denied that the administration was abandoning the people's initia-

"We will respect the decision and momentum of the nongovernment organizations and the Ulap (Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines) in pushing the people's mutiative which has generated almost 9 million votes, way in excess of (the required) 3 percent in each congressional district and 12 percent nationwide," With reports from he said. Michael Lim Ubac and TJ Bur-

'Da Vinci Code' for adults only...

is directed by Oscar Best Director Ron Howard and topbills Oscar Best Actor Tom Hanks.

The movie is based on the best-selling novel by Dan Brown which "chronides a murder investigation that could uncover a secret that has been protected since the days of Christ."

The R-18 rating for "Da Vinci" is surprising, according to a source in Columbia Pictures, the Philippine office of Sony Pictures Releasing International, producer of "Da Vinci."

Filipino employees of Columbia Pictures are not allowed by its head office in the United States to speak to the media. The Columbia source spoke to THE INQUIRER on the condition

of anonymity. "We will not appeal the R-18 rating because it might get an X on its sec-and screening," the source said

An R-18 rating, however, would mean that it will not be shown in SM mails nationwide because of the cine plex's ban on adult-themed films.

SM has a huge-chunk of the movie market, 40 to 50 percent of the ticket sales, according to Macie Imperial, director for acquisitions and marketing of Sky Films, which released the award-winning film "Brokeback

Mountain" in the Philippines. Ang Lee's "Brokeback Mountain" MTRCB and, as such, was not shown

Earlier, Columbia sent the INQUIRER an official statement that stated that "Da Vincl" earned "favorable ratings" in countries with large Catholic populations. It was "classified appropriate for children" in Poland (89.8 percent Cathoric), France (88 percent), Belgium (75 percent) and Slovakia (68.9 percent), as well as in China, Japan, Romania, Finland, Norway, Israel, Czech Republic and Turkey.

"Da Vinci" was given a PG-13 in the United States and an R-rating in Singapore and Spain.

'Mature discernment'

In the committee report, the MTRCB members explained that they found that the movie's "thematic, verbal and visual content ... requires mature discernment."

The committee that reviewed the film consisted of journalist Edmund Sicam, academician Berty Molina and lawyer Eric Mailonga. The screening was held in the Columbia Pictures office in Manila yesterday at 9 a.m. and the result was released by two in the afternoon of the same day.

"We allow screenings outside of the MTRCB office for sensitive films," board chair Marissa Laguardia explained. The distributor requests exclusive screenings for security reasons, to prevent piracy."

According to Laguardia, she sat through the "two-hour screening, as an observer, meaning I cannot overturn the committee's decision."

Laguardia shared her personal views on the film in a phone interview with the Inquirer yesterday: "It will not away the [Catholic] beliefs I've held since childhood, It's a sus pense-thriller, a work of fiction. It only aims to entertain."

Film is balanced

In any case, Laguardia described the movie "as balanced ... In the end, Tom Hanks' character had uplifting (lines of) dialogue. He said that Jesus is a human inspiration ... an extraordinary man ... and what matters is what you believe in."

Laguardia opined that the film also received an R-18 from the would open a healthy debate, "a discussion on what is true and fictitious. I believe it was explained well in the film. Still, that requires an audience above 18. Only a mature mind can discern, determine and separate fact from fiction."

The committee report echoed Laguardia's sentiments: "Minors, who are highly impressionable, should not be allowed ... because of the thematic issues raised on the divinity and celibacy of Jesus Christ and the inner workings of the Catholic Church."

However, the film "didn't merit an X rating because it doesn't constitute liefs. a clear, express or direct attack on the Catholic Church or religion ... arguments are mckled within an academic discourse or theoretical context by the movie's characters."

No SM mall shows

Imperial told the Inquier: "Broke-

back earned a lot of money throughout its four-week run in theaters like Robinsons, but we could have doubled our box-office grosses if only we had SM, which comprises almost 50 percent of the market."

In spite of the SM ban, the distributor "ordered 70 prints of 'Da Vinci,' the biggest number of prints we've requested in three decades," according to the Columbia source.

"Columbia will just have more screenings and more theaters in other cineplexes, to compensate for SM's nonparticipation," said the source. "We will open as scheduled on May

Ric Camaligan, first vice president of SM Leisure Inc. which operates SM Cinemas, confirmed that SM would stand by its R-18 ban. "We will not

SM, in fact, pulled out the movie's trailers and posters while waiting for the MTRCB's decision.

A work of art

Columbia's "official "statement," "Grave dilemma" however, stated that "the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) already went on record that it would not take steps to censor or block the showing of the movie in lo-

The statement quoted Msgr. Pedro Quitorio, CBCP spokesperson, as saying "the bishops view 'Da Vinci' as a work of art and not of science or history, so they do not see it as a threat to the teachings of the Church. If the faith of the people is strong, it would not be destroyed by one movel (or movie) "

In the same statement Sony Pictures spokesperson Jim Kennedy was quoted as saying: "Many religious leaders, including the Opus Dei, agree that the release of the film can provide a unique opportunity to edurate people about their work and be-

In fact, Opus Dei spokesperson Joey Magalona commented in the same Columbia statement: "The more you hide it, the more people will look for it ... [what's needed is] parental guidance so when doubts (among the young) arise, you can fix

No environmental

cused a leading environmentalist of being "a major violator of environmental laws."

Lagman said Gina Lopez, executive director of the ABS-CBN Foundation Inc. and a vocal critic of the housing project, had no environmental clearance certificate (ECC) to show for the construction and operation of an ecopark at the La Mesa reservoir.

He said this meant that the ecopark of Bantay Kalikasan, a project of the ABS-CBN Foundation, had "no guarantee" that it had put in place "mitigating measures" to protect the watershed area.

"Not required"

But in a text message from Africa, Lopez said two former environment secretaries, Elisea Gozzan and Michael Defensor, as well as a former director of the Environmental Management Bureau, Sixto Tolentino, had advised Bantay Kalikasan that an ECC was "not required."

Lopez said Lagman was trying to divert attention away from the "main issue," which was the danger that the housing project posed to Metro Manúa's water supply.

The principal critic of the housing project is a major violator of environmental laws," Lagman, a legal adviser of the 1,411 beneficiaries of the proposed housing project, said in a privilege speech at the House on N

He pointed out that Lopez was opposing the building of "low-cost houses for lowly retirees" of the old National Waterworks and Sewerage Administration (Nawasa) which had been delayed for four decades.

And yet, he said, the retirees had "undertaken not to start development without first securing an ECC" and had "committed to implement all required engineering mitigating measures to foreclose any contamination of the La Mesa reservoir."

The Nawasa was the precursor of the present Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage

"Thus is the grave dilemma of the poor and disadvantaged who are invariably pushed against the wall while the high and mighty get what they want with inordinate ease," Lagman said.

He said Amulfo Hernandez, Metro Manila regional director of the EMB, certified on Monday that the ecopark "had not been granted an ECC ... nor had an application been filed with us."

A check with the Laguna Lake Development Authority also showed that it had not issued an ECC to the ecopark.

Human activity

Lagran said the absence of an ECC was "signaficant" considering that the La Mesa Ecopark was drawing "thousands of visitors who swim, fish, bike, camp, cook and party in its facilities."

This magnitude of human activity could potentially generate volumes of waste and discharge which can pollute the dam," he said.

Lagman said that even if the ecopark proect was not covered by the ECC requirement, it was "still required to submit an application for the issuance of a certificate of noncoverage because the EMB-DENR may still require the project proponent to 'provide additional environmental safeguards as it may deem

He said there was no record that Bantay Kalikasan had ever applied for the certificate. But Lopez defended the ecopark, saying it

a joint project with the Quezon City government and the MWSS. "With full confidence, I can say that every-

thing we do at the ecopark has the objective of safeguarding the environment," she said. Lopez said the lawmaker should stick to the

ussue "instead of hitting at noble projects." She added: "To allege that we are violating the environment? You should go and see how the ecopark is run and was built. Lagman is diverting from the main issue that his housing project will contaminate the reservoir. This is

the issue, not the ecopark."



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(Sgd.) TERESITA V. ILAGAN Chairperson, Senior Bidding Committee

POI 18th 17 20th

Lea's daughter born in RP May 16

INCURRER not to name the hospital where she gave birth.

The mother "is doing well and taking a nap," but the father, Robert Chien, "is fussing nonstop about the baby," Lea's mom Ligaya told the In-QUIRER In a phone interview yesterday.

Nicole Beverly, weighed 6.10 lb. "The baby is a great Mother's Day gift for Lea and my mother-in-law,"

The baby, who will be christened

Robert said. "She's a quiet baby, a good girl," Ligaya said of her first grandchild, who was sleeping in the same room as her mother. "She looks like a mixture of Lea and Robert. But she looks a lot like Lea when she was newly

Promise to mom

paby home tomorrow.

born. She's fair-skinned."

Lea and Robert plan to take their

"Lea chose Nicole as [her baby's] first name because she had always liked it," Ligaya said. Robert confirmed this: "Lea likes

the way it sounds." "Her second name is Beverly, after Robert's mom, because it was a

promise we made to his family when his mom died three years ago," Lea told the Inquirer in an interview a The birth of her daughter could

very well be the toughest undertaking for Lea, who originated the role of Kim in "Miss Saigon," staged in the West End in London. She was only 17 when she won a Laurence Olivier award for her performance.

She later reprised the role on Broadway in New York, for which she won a Tony.

12 hours of tabor "It wasn't that bad really," Ligaya related. "It was her first child and she

was given an epidural." An epidural is the injection of an anesthetic into a person's spinal cord which partially numbs the abdomen and less.

Les started having contractions at 1 a.m., Ligaya recalled, "Thar's almost 12 hours of labor. She's very happy that she got her wish of delivering her first baby the natural way."

"Everything went smoothly," Robert recounted. "Nothing went wrong and she wasn't in a lot of pain. She's just tared. We're both very tired."

Lea, according to Ligaya, wanted to thank all her relatives and friends for all the prayers because she was able to get through this ordeal quietly in spite of the pain.

Made in RP

"It was made in the Philippines; it has to come out in the Philippines," she had said in an earlier interview. "My husband agreed with me on this. The great thing about giving birth in Manda is that we have a great support system bere.

"I have loss of friends who are also momnties and they give me tips," she said. "When I'm getting stressed about something, they assure me, Don't worry about that, you'd be finel I've been through that twice before. It's no big dealt"

Lea also said she would like to physically recover first before doing

any concerts or shows. "I want to give myself the chance to get my old body back and regain my strength for singing. For personal plans, we'd like to take the buby to Los Angeles, to meet family members, both on my and Rob's side. This is a very, very exciting time," she said.

Sa bagens



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Ecstasy' flight foiled

Illegal drugs in grandma's cargo

By Nikko Dizon

A 74-YEAR-OLD FILIPINO WOM an was apprehended yesterday by police and customs inspectors at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia) after almost 4,000 Ecstasy tablets worth an estimated P5 million were found in a box she was taking with her on a flight to the United States.

Leoncia Aquino Edwards, a US immigrant, and her son, Manuel Bagbag, were set to fly back to New Jersey via Korean Arrimes flight KE 622 when they were stopped from boarding the plane. Both ended up missing their flight

Edwards could be charged with violating the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Law or Republic Act 9165 if police laboratory results confirm Drug Enforcement Agency office at the Nata.

that the tablets seized from her are Ecstasy pilise customs officials said

Edwards told reporters that she did not even know that the tablets were in the box. She added that Jerome Magno, her Filipino neighbor in New Jersey, had called her up to ask if she could bring with her to the US a package that his friend would drop off at her house in Tandang Sora, Quezon City.

"Someone brought a shoe box to my house but I wasn't there. I just packed it with my other things inside my own box. Had I known what that shoe box contained, I wouldn't have taken it with me," Edwards said. The tablets were hidden inside nine cigarette packs packed into a shoe box. But Capt. Mariano Biteng Jr., a Customs ponce

official, brushed aside Edward's explanation "Passengers should know what is in their lug-

gage. If someone asks a favor to bring cargo not your own, open the package of it is sealed. It is for your own protection," Biteng said.

Edwards is now detruned at the Philippine

Check that LPG cylinder, **NBI** warns

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE NATIONAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGAtion has warned the public about the pronferation of unauthorized aquefied petroleum gas (LPG) cylinders following the seizure of P300,000 worth of LPG tanks bearing the brand names of several oil firms in Antipolo

NBI Intellectual Property Rights Division chief Jose Justo Yap said they conducted several raids on Monday based on complaints from Petron Corp., Philpmas Shell Corp., Total Philippines Inc. and Superkalan Gaz Corp.

NBI agents led by Senior Agent Dave Segunial confiscated nearly 250 LPG gas tanks from MIA-J Poultry Supply, RJ Rice and Poultry Supply, M.R. Reyes Rice Dealer, AJOC Gen. Merchandise and JZM Marketing. The establ shments had allegedly passed off the tanks as products of the four oil companies

Girl, grandmom found dead in home

By Jocelyn R. Uy

her grandmother were found murdered inside their house in Parañaque City on Monday

CUSTOMS personnel examine the

alleged Ecstasy tablets seized from a

senger of a US-bound Right. Physicis

Relatives of Geleen Banzuela and her 54-year old grandmother, Zenaida, discovered their bodies inside the toilet of their house at 17 President Quezon St., Monte Villa de Monsod in Barangay Sun Vailey | found when relatives forced their at around 7 p.m., city police

chief Supt. Ronald Estilles said

Initial investigation disclosed A NINE-YEAR OLD GIRL AND that the victims suffered head injuries which may have been inflicted by a blunt object like a pipe or a hammer, according to Estilles

The victims' neighbors told the police their last sighting of the older Banzueia was on Sunday.

Estilles ordered his men to look for Banzuela's son, 33-year-old Gilbert, who was nowhere to be way into the house, prompting

the police to consider him as the main suspect. Estilles said the suspect was al-

.egediy addicted to drugs "It is possible that he may have killed his mother and his ntece in anger because he was not given money to sustain his drug habit. It is always like that in drug cases that we have handled in the past," he

The victims' bodies were brought to the Loyola Funera. Homes for autopsy.

Marine mammal turns up in creek

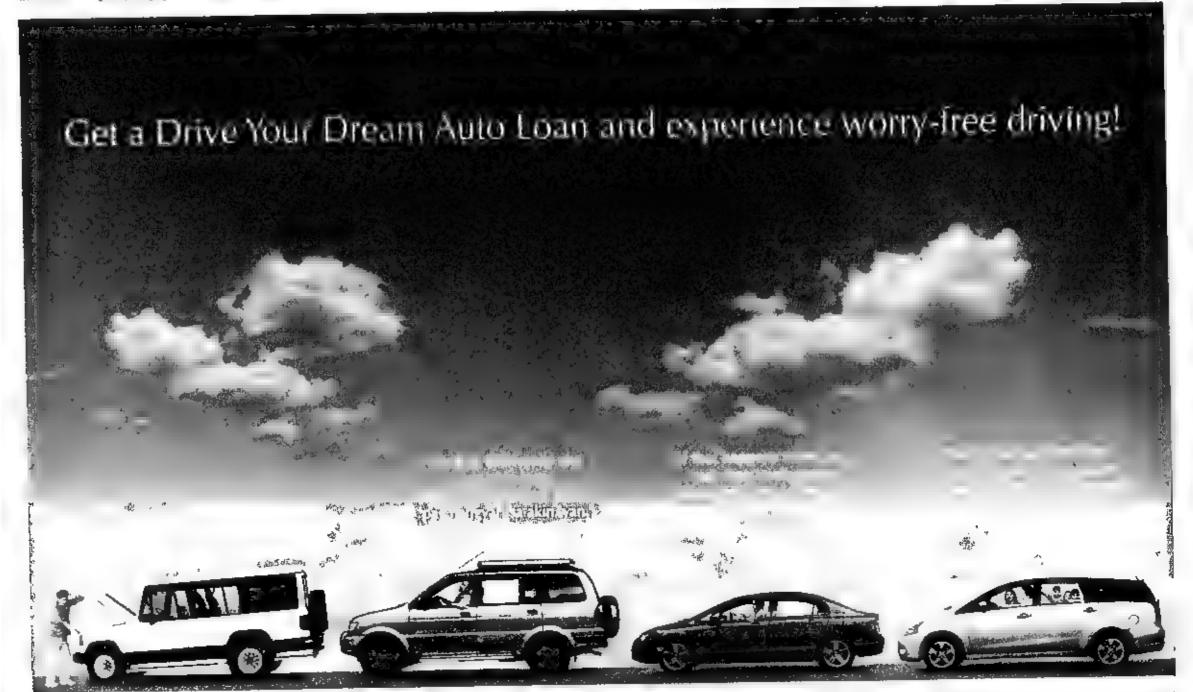
A MARINE MAMMAL ABOUT NINE FEET long and weighing about 150 kilos, swam tnto a creek connected to the Manila Bay, just off the Coastal Road in Parañaque City,

before noon yesterday. It died several hours later on the way to the Mamla Yacht Club for examination by marine experts, said Dr. Ajerico Sebastian, officer-in-charge of the Manila Zoo zoologi

He said they have yet to determine whether the mammal was a whale or a dolphin. It was and abrasions, Sebasuan added Jocelyn Uy



probably sick because it had several wounds PARANAQUE City resident with surprise visitor.



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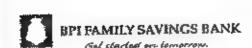
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5 cops face robbery raps

By Luige A. del Puerto

FIVE MANILA POLICEMEN, FOUR OF whom were arrested in an antidrugs operation in Tondo, Manila, last week, have been charged with robbery in band in the Office of the Ombudsman.

Charged by the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group of the Philippine National Police were PO1 Erwin Castro, PO2 Jonathan Rutz, PO3 Mike Pabian Ongpauco, PO2 Dranreb Cipriano and PO1 Rhunyalie Salazar.

Salazar is detailed to the National Capital Region Police Office-Regional Intelligence and Special Operations Office, while the rest are members of the Manila Police District's anti-illegal drugs division.

Salazar was the fifth policeman who allegedly got away when a team of agents from the CIDG and the Anti-Illegal Drugs Special Operations Task Force arrested the four policemen last Thursday in a parking lot on Jose Abad Santos corner Hermosa Streets, police

The area is a "well-known" trading place for illegal drugs, according to the CIDG

A search of the policemen's car yielded a kito of suspected methamphetamine hy-

drochloride or shabu which later turned out to be "tawas," a crystalline substance used as deodorant. The policemen claimed they were trying to arrest big time drug buyers by pre-

tending to be drug pushers. However, they had no idea that their "buy-

er" was working for the CIDG The five policemen were charged with robbery after they brandished their guns to get the cash-actually a combination of marked and boodle money-which the CIDG asset was carrying for the entrapment operation.

"At gampoint, the armed men (Manila policemen) foresbly opened the door of the vehicle and attempted to snatch the buy bust money but failed due to the interdiction of the CIDG operatives," said the CIDG charge

"The suspects claimed they were also police officers conducting a police operation However, when asked for documents and the names of their team leader, they failed to show any document and also failed to name their team leader," said Supt. Ireno Inal, a CIDG officer

The four policemen, except for Salazar who fied, were released to their superior pending the filing of charges against them.

Museum to rise in Marikina

TO ENSURE its place in the city's history, the oldest chapel in the oldest barangay in Masikina City is planning to build a historical museum. The museum will be built beside the San Isidro Labrador Chapei an Barangay Jesus Cela Pena, the oldest barangay in the city. The church is where the first Mass in Marikina City was celebrated by Father Pedro de Arce on April 16, 1630. For this reason, the city celebrates its foundation day on the same date. Pasteral Council chair Tess Salas told the lucuuses they plan to display books and even relics and antiques at the museum that could enlighten residents about the history of the barangay. In the meantime, proponents are looking for denors to fight the project. Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

Safe ka sa Divisoria'

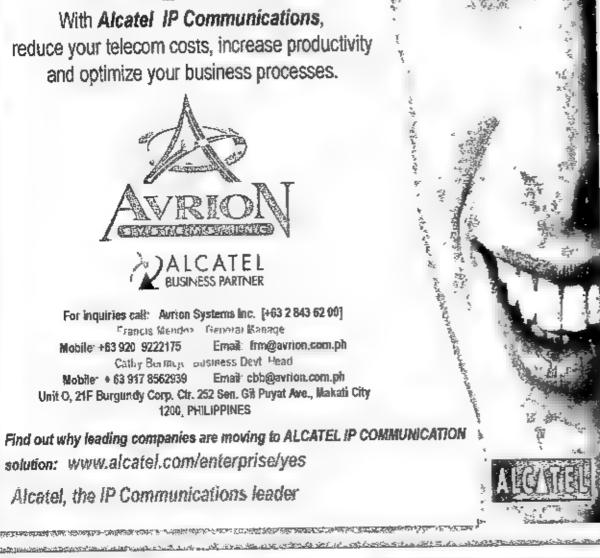
IN AN EFFORT to provide assistance and security to

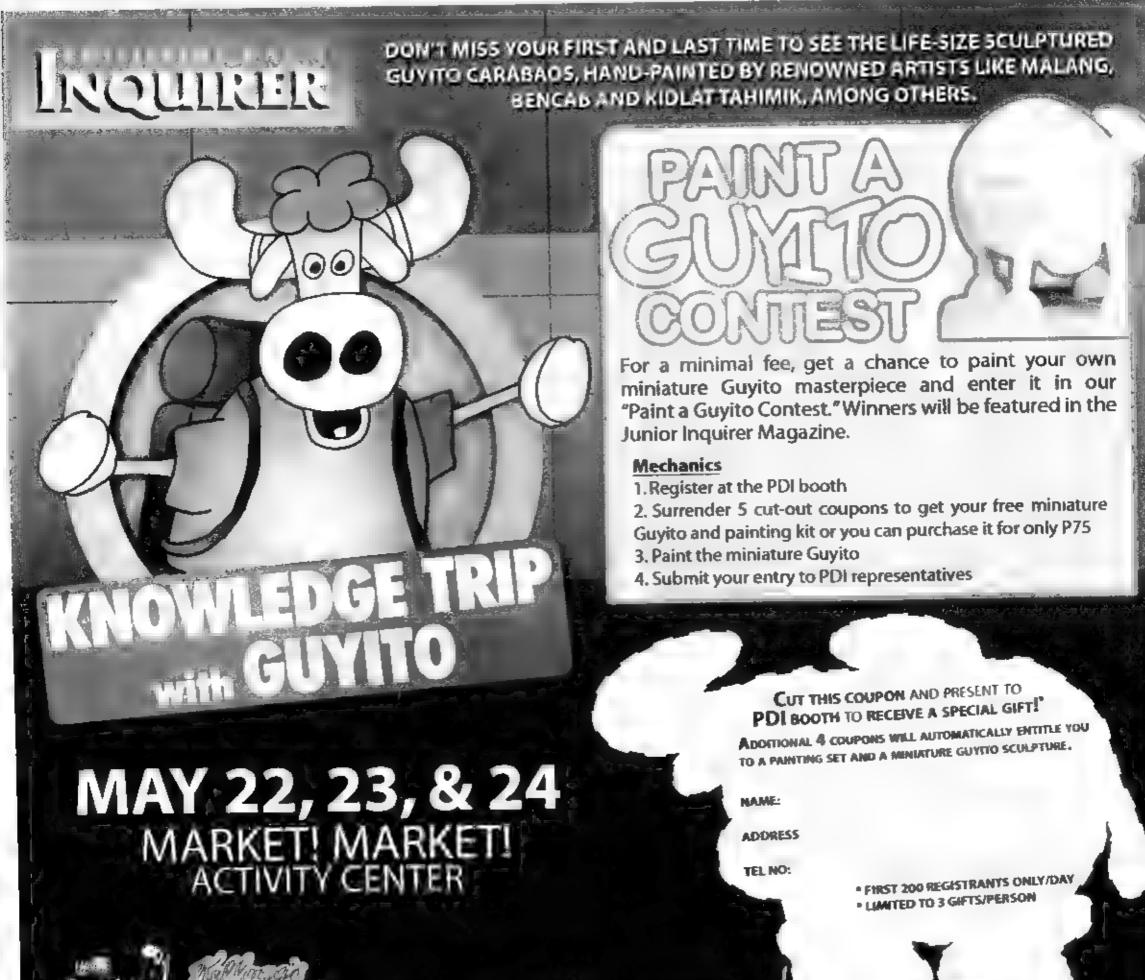
thousands of students shopping for school supplies, the Manila Police District will be launching its "Safe Ka sa Divisoria" project temorrow. Sept. Romulo Sapitula, MPD Criminal Investigation and

Detection Unit chief, said they are expecting students and their parents to flock to Divisoria in the next lew days to shop for notabooks bags and other school items. "Through the program, we will ensure the safety of the shoppers and prevent common criminal incidents such as robbery and theft from taking place," Sapitula told the .woulder in an interview. Sapitula said he would deploy plantclothes policemen on Recto Avenue and the streets of flaya and Juan Luna, where most of school supply vendors are located. Margaux C. Orliz

Girl dies of injuries

THE TWO-YEAR-OLD girl who was allegedly dropped from the third floor of her house by her namy's former boyfriend died of injunes on Monday morning. Aira Plan was brought to the Philippine General Hospital on Sunday night after Marciano Garrado dropped her from the third floor of her house on A. Cruz St, Purck 4. Barangay Lower Bleutan, said SPO1 Conrad Mapill, case investigator. "The girl's parents just informed us this morning," Mapill told the Incurren yesterday. Aira's parents have filed murder charges against Garrado in the city prosecutor's office. Garrado was visiting the girl's nanny, Teresita Tayobong, to win her back but when she ignored him, the suspect allegedly picked up the girl who was playing on the terrace and dropped her from the third floor. The police have yet to receive the results of the autopsy conducted on the victim but Mapili said the child died due to frac-





The WORLD

Libya made 'no concessions' to US for new ties

in a new era of ties with the United States after Washington's announcement of a resumption of full diplomatic relations, emphasizing no concessions had been made to ensure the rapprochement.

Foreign Minister Abdel Rahman Shalgham welcomed the announcement-which also saw Libya's removal from the US list of states that sponsor terronsm--as a "new page" in relations between the two countries.

The foreign ministry's information chief Hassima ai-Shawesh told a news conference "no concession" was made to the US, saying rela-

respect and equality, without interference in internal affairs."

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice had said Washington will soon open an embassy in Tripoli. Diplomatic ties were broken in 1981, two years after the US Embassy was sacked by radical student demonstrators.

Their resumption also comes two decades after alleged Libyansponsored terror attacks prompted the US to launch air raids on Tripoh, killing 51 people.

Rice said on Monday: "We are taking these actions in recognition of Libya's commitment to its re-

TRIPOLI—LIBYA TUESDAY BASKED tions would be "based on mutual munciation of terrorism and the ex- ed to the rank of ambassador withcellent cooperation Libya has provided to the United States and other members of the international community in response to common global threats faced by the civilized world since Sept. 11,

> Shawesh even indicated that the top US diplomat could visit Tripoli soon, saying Libya "is waiting for an upcoming visit by Ms Rice and we are happy for this." Such a visit has not been excluded by the US.

Assistant Secretary of State for the Middle East David Weich said in Washington US diplomatic representation in Tripoli will be elevatin 15 days.

The improvement in relations and Monday's announcement of a resumption of full diplomatic ues

follows Libyan leader Moamar Gadhafi's decision in December, 2003 to halt its program of weapons of mass destruction.

After Gadhafi agreed to open Libva's weapons production sites to inspection by US and British experts, Washington opened a special interests section in Tripoli in February, 2004. This was later upgraded to a "liaison office" the same year.

Shawesh said all differences between Libya and the US have now

been resolved, and that Monday's announcement "will give a major boost to economic and political ties" between the two countries.

The foreign ministry said in a statement that "the resumption of full diplomatic relations between Libya and America is an important step destined to reinforce bilateral ties in the interests of world peace, stability and security."

Welcoming the decision in London, British Foreign Secretary Margaret Beckett said: "Libya has made significant progress since its historic decisions in 2003 to renounce terrorism and eliminate its weapons of mass destruction." APP



GADHAFI

Jew-Arab couple fight to live together

By Allyn Fisher-Man

RAMALLAH, WEST BANK-JASMIN AVISSAR and Osama Zatar feil in love, got marned and hoped to live happily ever after-but she's an Israelı Jew and he's a Parestiman Muslim and now they have nowhere to call home.

The couple's "Romeo and Juliet" struggle to live together is a rare tale of cross-border love in a land riven by years of violence between Israel and Palestinians.

Avissar, a 25-year-old classical dancer, met Zatar, 26, when they both worked at an isolated animal shelter on the border between Jerusalem and the occupied West Bank.

They wed two years ago, but Israel has not granted them permission to live in the Jewish state. So they live in the West Bank city of Ramailah but on borrowed time-Avissar's Israeli army-issued permit to cross into the Palestinian-run city is temporary.

Israel denies residence permits to virtually all Palestinian men under-35 under a law, passed during a five-year old Palestinian revolt, asmed at tightening security and preventing suicide bombings. The Israeli military also generally bars Israeus from Palestinian-

ruled territory. It is rare for Jews to marry Arabs either in Israel or the occupied territories, and the few who do tend to keep quiet about a union frowned upon by many Israelis and Palestini-

"We're in a Kafka-esque situation. All we want is the right to live together as a married couple," said Avissar, who crosses an Israeii



PALESTINIAN Muslim Osama Zatar, 26, with his Israeli Jew wife, Jasmin Avissar, 25, near the West Bank village of Qarawat Bani Zeid. norms

checkpoint almost daily to work as a waitress ın Jerusalem.

"The authorities are constantly trying to keep us apart," said Zatar, a sculptor who sports a dark ponytail. "We love each other and plan a future together, if we can have

That "if" rings through their lives—their uncertain situation makes talking about buying a house, or having children impossi-

The couple have appealed to Israel's High ent way."

Court to force the government to allow them to live together indefinitely, either in Israel or in the Palestinian territories.

Their chances of success are uncertain. On Sunday, Israel's High Court narrowly upheld a law that denies Israeli residency to many Palestinians who marry Israelis, rejecting appeals against a statute that critics say vi-

olates human rights and is racist. With their lives on hold, Avissar and Zatar have struggled to make a decent living in Ra-

Zatar has been unable to find regular work. a common problem for many Palestinians in the West Bank's weak economy, even before a US-led boycott on foreign funds to a Palestman government led by the militant Hamas

The couple's main income now comes from what Avissar makes serving tables at the

Jerusalem coffee shop.

But the couple still dream of a happy-ever

Avissar hopes to open a bailet school for Palestinians—if Israel ever grants her a longterm permut to stay in the West Bank. Her family in Israel has accepted her marriage. Some of Zatar's relatives had accused him of betraying his people by marrying an Israeli; now they accept her

Many people look at me as a stereotype Israeli, as a potential soldier or settler, just like all Palestmians in the eyes of Israelis are potential terrorists," said Avissar.

"We hope to show everyone there's a differ-

WORLDBRIEFS

81 now dead in Brazil gang violence

SAO PAULO-A powerful gang that has launched an offensive against Brazillan pofice attacked civilian targets for the first time Monday, terrorizing Sao Paulo in three nights of violence that has left 81 dead, officials said. Some 180 attacks have taken place since Friday in Brazil's wealthiest and most populous state, killing 39 police officers, 38 suspected criminals and four civilians. At least 48 police and passers-by were wounded, while 91 suspects have been arrested. Gangs targeted civilians for the first time Monday, torching 56 buses and attacking eight banks, the state gov-

Chavez defiant in face of arms ban



LONDON---Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez on Monday brushed aside the JS suspension of arms sales to his country, saying "this doesn't matter to us at all." "It's the empire and it has a great capacity to do harm to the countries of the world." he said, referring to the US as "an irrational empire" The Venezuelan leader, on a visit to London, also said his government would not respond with punitive measures such as travel restrictions. "There's no way we will do that. We will find a solution to this," he said. The United States on Monday announced it was imposing a barr on arms sales to Venezuela because of what it

claims is a lack of support by Chavez's government for counterterrorism efforts. For nearly a year, there has been a nearly total lack of cooperation with antiterrorism, sald Daria Jordan, a State Department spokesperson. Chavez, who often claims that Washington is planning to invade his country, ruled out shutting down his country's oil production in response to the US arms embargo. "We will never use oil as a political weapon against a people," he said during an address to about 600 business leaders, academics and diplomats at a London banquet half.

B&L lens cleaner recalled worldwide

BAUSCH & Lomb said Monday that it was halting worldwide sales of its ReNu With MoistureLog soft contact lens cleaner because tests showed that its misuse could leave consumers at risk for a potentially blinding fungal infection. The move followed the company's decision last month to suspend US sates of the product after federal health officials linked an unusually high number of the fungus cases to use of the lens cleaner.

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Éditor Luverne B. Gueco

The WORLD

6,000 US troops to border

WASHINGTON—PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH ON Monday ordered up to 6,000 troops to the US-Mexico border in a bid to stem the flow of illegal immigrants into the United States.

"The need to secure our border is urgent," Bush said in a nationally broadcast speech, underscoring the importance of the issue.

He said up to 6,000 National Guard troops could be deployed on the southern border for up to one year beginning next month.

The US president insisted that any

effort to tighten America's permeable border must be coupled with a guestworker program for undocumented

immigrants already in the country.

There are an estimated 11.5 million illegal migrants in the United States, more than half of them from Mexico.

Such a program, Bush said, would be part of a comprehensive immigra-

tion reform that would also provide a pathway to citizenship for many workers currently living "in the shadows of

"To secure our border, we must create a temporary worker program," the president said, adding that creating a guest-worker program acknowledges that "there are many people on the other side of our border who will do anything to come to America to work

and build a better life."

The president's proposals added controversy to the immigration debate. Street protests in recent weeks

have attracted millions of legal and illegal migrants and their supporters.

The demonstrations urged a leaster strictive immigration policy, and opposed a bill approved in December by the House of Representatives that would make illegal entry a crimo.

Bush said his temporary worker proposal "would create a legal path for foreign workers to enter our country in an orderly way, for a limited period of time," and "would give honest im migrants a way to provide for their families while respecting the law."

US BORDER Patrol agents use All Terrain vehicles as they patrol along the US border with Mexico in this undated photograph. Bush announced plans to deploy up to 6,000 National Guard troops to the border because "we do not yet have full control of the border."

Middle path disappoints both sides

By Monica Davey and Raiph Blumenthal

CHICAGO—AS JOSE F WATCHED PRESIdent Bush's address from an apartment on this city's Northwest side, he shook his head fiercely at moments. At the prospect of tamper-proof identification cards for legal workers, at the many mentions of increased border security, and at what he saw, in the end, as uncertainty of the future Bush intends for illegal immigrants like himself.

"I worry about the militar zation and whether this will mean more deaths on the border," said Jose F, 27, who sneaked in from Mexico nearly eight years ago and who asked that his last name not be used because he feared losing his job at a social services agency, deportation, or both. "And identification cards will only make it harder to survive and people will, have to go further underground and work for cash."

In Houston, meanwhile, Louise Whiteford watched the president with equaskepticism. Whiteford, president of Texans for immigration Reform a group opposed to illegal immigration, swiftly took issue with several of Bush's promises, including an increase in the Border Patrol from 9,000 to 12,000 agents

"This is very inadequate," said Whiteford, 76. "That's about the number of police in Fort Worth and Dalias." And when the psesident said he planned to add 6,000 more by 2008, she shook her head, adding, "That's too long."

If Jose F and Whiteford were any indication, Bush managed to disappoint people on both sides of the immigration debate on Monday night

Each side saw hints of a further fight

Some supporters of tighter border restrictions said they did not approve of the way they said Bush had signaled that he wants some of the nation's estimated 11 million illegal immigrants to become legal. On the other hand, some immigrants and their advocates said they did not agree with his clearly stated opposition to any-

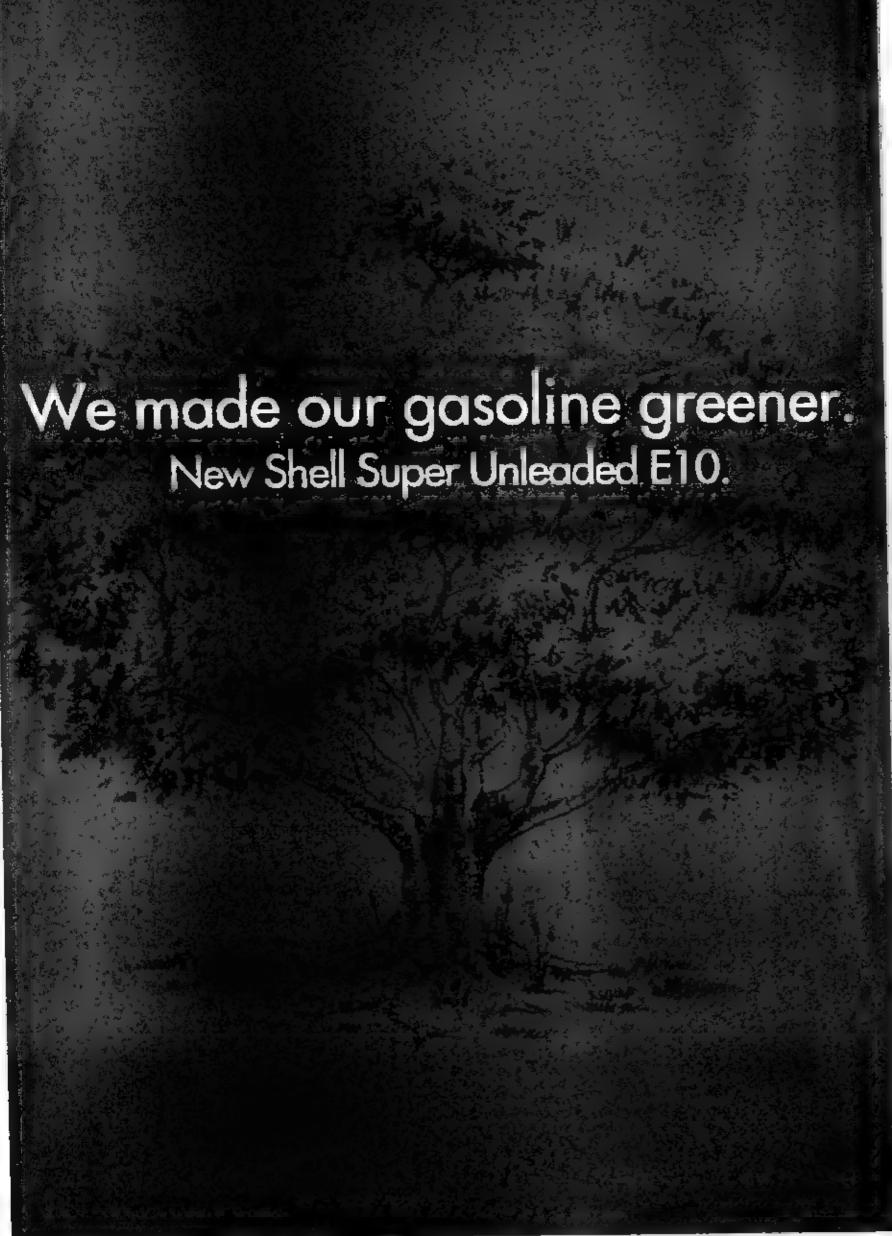
thing resembling "amnesty."

"I don't know what he is saying for someone like me," Jose R said. "I have been working really hard I have learned English I pay taxes I am not here in the country to bring problems. If I don't fit not the group" that might gain legal status "it's going to upset me."

Whiteford was on guard against anything Bush might say about congressional bills that would allow illegal immigrants to legalize their status over time with a

"My citizenship is not for sale," she sald
"I don't like the idea that money can buy
citizenship."

NYT



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CLOSE GUARDING: The Tour's big guns ride together along Sumulong Highway in Antipolo City. Sunboit's Santy Barnachea, in yellow jersey, symbolic of overall leadership (second from left), pedals behind Elecir Sport's John Ricafort as Inca's Erickson Obosa and two-stage winner Arnel Quirimit, also of Elixir Sports, watch his back.

Barnachea's lead shrinks

Gorrantes outkicks Davadilla

By Musong R. Castillo

LUCENA CITY—WHERE'S HELP when you need it?

Santy Barnachea couldn't find anyone willing, and his overall lead in the Tour Pilipinas Tanduay Padyak Pinoy 2006 yesterday diminished after Stage 5, where an obscure rider finally came to the fore and dangerous Frederck Feliciano emerged as his closest pursuer.

Barnachea got into a shouting match with some of the Tour's rookies who refused to heip and lost significant ground as Reinhard Gorrantes outkicked Warren Davadilia at the end of the 144.5-kilometer, up-and-down

journey from Marikina to here. It was the first career stage win year-old Gorrantes, who timed 3 hours, 30 minutes and 21 seconds, the same clocking of the third-placed Feliciano who zoomed to sec-

and 7 seconds behind Barnachea. Gorrantes' victory also marked the first time a non-skipper won a stage in this Tour. Philippine Team members Arnel Quirimit of El.xir Sports (Stages 2 and 4), Februano of Air21 (Stage 3) and Erieson Obosa of Inca

(Stage 1) were the previous winners. Gorrantes also cracked the top 10, dislodging Eusebio Quinones at 10th, 22 minutes and 35 seconds off the overall leader.

Davadilla, whose quest for an unprecedented third win in the summer classic now but a dream, tried to win the stage but miscalculated a sharp turn heading to the finish.



with a supporter in Lucena City.

Barnachea, who was hoping to rule the lap as a birthday gift to his son Darren, who turned two yesterday, arrived in a 22-man third wave, 3:47 behind the lap winner

He now has a total time of 21 hours, 21 ond from third overall, now just 4 minutes minutes and 35 seconds heading to the windup of the short edition of the Tour

Outrimit, who helped Barnachea widen his jead to 7:29 over Obosa after Stage 4, was also in that group like Obosa, who dropped to third.

"I rode with a lot of rookies," Barnackea, who has been wearing the yellow jersey of overall leadership since Stage 2, said in Filipino. They are young but already too oppor-

The still intact field of 80 riders have three more stages left with the event to be decided in the next two starting with today's trek to Sta. Rosa, Laguna, from here via the dreaded "Tationg Eme" in Pagbilao, Quezon.

Cossack Riders back on top after five grueling stages

LUCENA CITY-COSSACK VODKA PUT FOUR R.Ders inside the top 20 in Stage 5 of the Tour Pilipinas Tanduay Padyak Pinoy 2006 from Marikina to this busiling city yesterday to reclaim the overall team lead from Team Elixir With rookies Edgardo Ballsoer and rish Valenzuela finishing in the first pack with a clocking of 3 hours, 30 minutes and 21 seconds, Cossack zoomed to a 2-minute and 39.073 advantage over Elizar with its total time of 87-26:35.149. Air21 actually won the stage with slopper Frederick Feliciano ancharing a team effort of 14:08:55.202, to be in third overall, 20:11,673 minutes off the pace.





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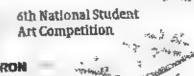
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San Miguel Purefoods Red Bull Alaska Ginebra Coca-Cora Talk 'N Text Air21 Sta. Lucia

GAMES TODAY (Aranela Coliseam) 4:40 p.m. Coca-Cola vs Ginebra 7:35 p.m.—Purefoods

vs Talk 'N Text

THE TWO-HOUR TIME SLOT MONday morning at the Adidas Sports Camp at The Fort in Taguig should have been filled with echoes of bouncing balls, screeching shoes and shrill whistles.

of the Auto of The Auto A. " PROSPER OF THE PROPERTY OF THE

Instead, the gym was dark and completely silent. The team that should have been practicing there at 9 a.m. took the day off because no one, it seemed, felt like playing.

"We weren't in the proper mand frame," said Purefoods coach Ryan PBA Philippine Cup today at the

Gregorio, 'who canceled the Giants' practice a day after forward Eugene Tejada suffered a severe neck injury in what could be the worst on-court accident to ever hit the pro league.

Had Terada not fallen bad on his back chining a rebound battle against Red Bull Sunday night, the Giants' worries would have been centered on how to grab that other outright semifinal slot in the Gran Matador BrandyAraneta Coliseum, where they will face the Talk 'N Text Phone Pals.

Giants continuè mission under pall of gloom

Gregorio's worries would have been simply on how to work around a Phone Pals squad boosted by major trade anguistions using a ruster struck down by the absence of Kerby Raymundo, Jun Limpot and Noy Castillo

Gregorio also had to worry about the state of his team: "It's hard to tell (if the players are okay). I just told them lift each other's spirits."

Perhaps Gregorio can simply tear a page off the Barangay Ginebra playbook and use it against the Phone Pals in their 7:35 p.m. encounter. The Kings, playing without starters Rommel Adducul and Erik Menk and key back-up players Andy Seigle and Rodney Santos, managed to surprise the Phone Pals last week.

Ginebra, which plays Coca-Cola to-

we have to stay together, we have to day at 4:40 p.m., leaned on Mark Caguioa's 42 points to upset a Talk 'N Text squad beefed up by Don Aliado and Rerren Ratualo.

> But the Kings, at least, did not have any mental or emotional worties to deal with. For the Giants, getting that other outright semifinal slot-San Miguel already claimed the first one -seems too trivial when put beside the tragic event that befell their team-Jasmine W. Payo

> > 2006 Asian F3 Series

Driver's Championship

1 Tyson Sy Speedtech

2 Dillon Battistini, JA

3. James Winslow JA

4 John D Rara, Aran

S. Dado Peña Team

Asia, 60 points

Motorsports 33 points

Motorsports, 32 points

Pacing, 23 points

Goddard, 22 points

Tortillos ruin Painters' semis bid in overtime

By Jasmine W. Payo

MARVIN CRUZ TOOK FULL CONTROL IN overtime as Granny Goose foiled Rain or Shine's bid for an outright semifinal berth with a 78-73 victory in the PBL Unity Cup yesterday at the San Andres Gym in Manila.

More importantly, the Torollos clinched the twice to-beat advantage in the quarterfinals after wrapping up their elimination campaign with a third best 8-6 record.

Cruz went scoreless in the fourth quarter but shot nine of his 15 points in the extra period.

JR Quinahan teamed up with Cruz to finish with 13 points, 11 rebounds and three blocks.

"Marvin was awesome," said coach Robert Sison. "We caught Rain or Shine in their off night." Harbour Centre secured the last quarterfinal

berth by nipping TeleTech in overtime, 81-78.

GAMES TOMORROW (Ohranz Sports Caster)

2 p.m.—Magnolla vs Toyota Olls 4 p.m.—Montaña vs Hapee PCU

First Game HARROWS CENTRE SE-

Tengrio 21, Yeo 14, Reyes 11, Majerhoter B, Chia 7, Gaco 6, Gamboa 4, Arana 4, Coching 3. Lanete 2, Paterno 1. TELETECH 78-Doruelo

16, Capus 14, Latoreno 12, Mescado 11, Gelig 6, Villarnin 5, Fang 5, Estraria 4, Mendoza 3, Tolentino 2, Sierra 0, Dunell 0. Quarters: 20-21, 38-35, 63-54, 75-75, 81-78 (OT)

Second Game GRANNY GOOSE 78—Cruz 15, Duiñahan 13, Dela Peña 9, Saldua 8, Grialdo 7, Sardos 6, David 5, Latonio 5, Ibañes 5,

Concha 3, Alfad 2, Gavino 0, Ferrer 0. PAIN OR SHIME 73—Tangley 26, Malabaran 12, Eman 10, Enrile 8, Cabatu 6, Ortiguarra 4, Yarrxino 3, Reyes 2, Sta. Maria

2, Orbeta 8, Urra 8. Quarters: 15-14, 33-29, 43-46, 64-64, 78-73 (OF)



MARVIN Ortiguerra (right) of Rain or Shine thwarts an attempt by Granny Goose's JR Quiñahan in yesterday's game.

Consistency name of game for leader Sy

TYSON SY'S amazing domination of the opening three rounds gave him a big head start in the battle for the overall championship in the Asian For mula Three se-

But the Filipino young gun

can't afford to rest on his early victories, accord ing to Speedtech Asia chief Edgen Dy-Liacco.

With this year's series featuring three races in each leg, little mistakes in the time trials and early rounds could prove costly, said Dy-Liacco, adding consistency will be the key if Sy wants to crown himself the overall winner at season's end.

"We need to be consistent to earn more points," said the 36-year-old Dy-Liacco, "It is good Tyson is now more matured. He has learned a lot from his experience the previous year and we expect better results this time." Sy, 18, choked several times under pressure in

last year's series, especially in the last two legs at the Batangas Racing Circuit, and eventually finished fourth overall, a point behind third placer James Winslow of England.

This time, however, Sy has approached each race with confidence, aware that "whatever problems I encounter with the car will be fixed."

"If there's a problem during the race, I will have to make adjustments to my driving," said Sy, who will go into the next three rounds next month at the Zhaha. International Circuit in China with 60 points. "The risk is bigger if you're too aggressive and you wind up without points."

Senes newcomer Dulon Bamsun, of England is running second with 33 points built around two second place finishes at the BRC, whate his teammate, Winslow, is running third with 32.

Bata, 4 other Filipinos advance MVBA: Lhuillier tackles Toyota

HALL OF FAMER EFREN "BATA" Vietnam, will meet American Allen Reyes led four other Filipmos in the winners' bracket of the 2006 Enjoypool.com 9-Ball Championship (formerly BCA Open) at the Riviera Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada.

The 51 year-old Reyes beat American Lou Butera,*11-9,*in the 4-37 winner over Evan Broxineyer. opener, towing along compatriots Dennis Orcollo, Jose Parica, Santos Sambajon and Rodolfo Luat.

Reyes, fresh off his victory in the 2006 SMB Asian 9-ball Tou

termensurfuren dese

Hopkins in the next round,

Orcollo, gold medalist in the 2005 Southeast Asian Games, bested former world trick-shot champton Fabro Petroni of Italy, 115, and will face American Tony Crosby, 11-

Parica trounced former US champion Nick Varner, 11-8, and Canadian No. 2 player Luc Salvas, 11-6, while Sambajon nipped Joey Korsi-Marion Bernardino ak 11-7

GAME TODAY (New Cate City Collscom) 5:30 p.m.—M. Lhuitlier Kwarta Padala-Cebu.

vs Toyota-Roilo Warriors GAME TOMORROW (Mandage City Sports Complex) 5:30 p.m.—Mantawi Traders vs Cabu Landmaster-Toledo

CEBU, CITY-UNDEFEATED TOP SEED M. Liveillier Kwarta Padaia-Gebu begins its championship drive when it hosts Toyota-Boilo in Game One of their best-of-three semifinal series in the ML Kwarta Padala Mindanao Visayas Basketball Association (MVRA) First Conference today at the New Cebu City Coliseum.

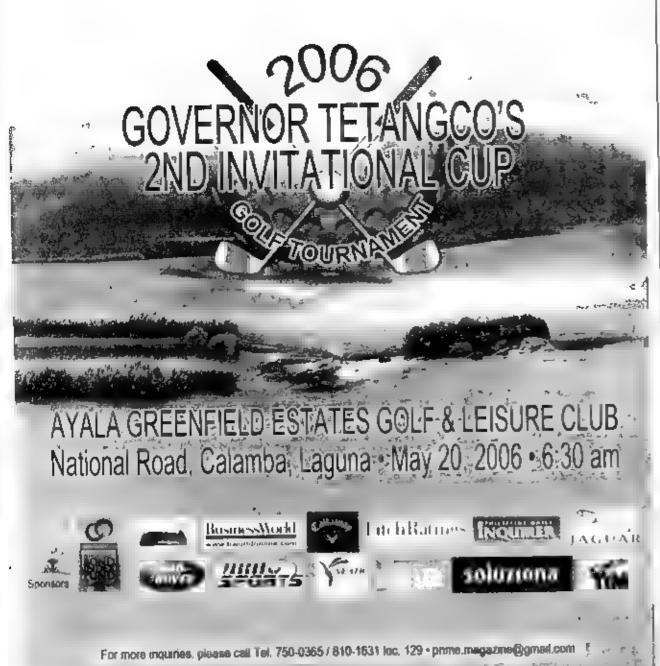
The Jewelers of Michel Lhuillier and Coach Raul Alcoseba, however, will be without top gun Stephen Padilla, who was recalled to the PBA.

Tomorrow, the Mantawi Traders of Mayor Thadeo Quano and coach Eddie Ybanez host the Cebu Landmaster-Toledo of realtor Joe Soberano and coach Jun Tan in Game Two of their Visayas Division semifinal series in Mandaue. City Accessor

Both squads were still playing their series opener at press time. The game was made possible by ML Kwarra Padala, Cokaliong Shipping Lines, Nature's Spring Drinking Water, Panasonic, Mohen and Suloicio Lines.



present the



2006 Tour can't quench the original thirst

(SALUTE: The great sportsman Leo Prieto, founding commissioner of the Philippine Basketball Association, celebrates his birthday on Friday. Accomplished people who had served under Mr. Prieto, including television impresario Bobong Velez and lawyer Rudy Salud, founding sec-gen of the World Boxing Council and himself a very successful PBA commissioner, extend best wishes to their former mentor and big boss. We salute you, sir.)

WARREN DAVADILLA, DEFENDING CHAMpion, is very much in the race. How come the 2006 Tour, given the crispy label Padyak Pinoy Road Cycling championship, has not sizzled hot as the marathon bike races of past sum-

Because it lacks the big ingredients, swears a former champion who joined thus year's cycling caravan before breaking off after only three days.

He says he finds the current Tour, now sponsored by Tanduay, deprived of the old luck, juice and glitter.

But isn't Davadilla, seeking his third title, not big enough to inject the big challenge and excitement into the field?

Well, he explains, Padyak Pinoy doesn't happen to be the Tour de France and Davadilla is definitely no Lance Armstrong, seven-time winner of the world's toughest multi-staged cycling marathon.

Our friend, a former two-time winner of the Tour in the '70s, begs that his name no longer be mentioned here.

He explains that race organizers, who happen to be his friends, did not want it to appear that the sponsors were not getting their money's worth in this year's race.

Sorry, but that's exactly what's happening in the 2006 Tour. Sponsors have every reason to feel shortchanged.

Despite the glowing prose of sports scribes from all the national dailies, this year's Tour could not live up to old expectations.

At least, the event did not consume itself and the overall title has remained anybody's race after the usually conclusive Baguno stages.

There'll still be something worthy of the chase, our friend adds, when the race goes through the so-called Tationg Sungay, a mysterious and hitherto untried uphtil

BARE EYE



Recab Trinidad

Bur, going to the winning ingredients, it appears the 2006 Tour has started to lose its novelty this early due to the absence of several med-and-tested stars.

Most of these power riders, reports our friend, like the members of the Pagcor team, failed to join the two-day qualifying race because they were out compenny in Maiaysia's Tour de Langkawi

Singled out among the missing stars in the 2006 Tour were: Victor Espirith, Lloyd Reynante, Bernard Luzon, Albert Primero and Sherwin Carrera, 2004 Tour Piapunas champion Rhyan Tanguilig is also now in the Middle East working.

That's a hefty field indeed, as big maybe as

one amb of the Tour useif. Actually, this discrepancy should have been remedied for the Tour to retain its original color and excitement.

Now, it doesn't help any that crucial truth is being hidden from both the sponsors and the public.

There's a grave danger here. If they are not exposed and subsequently checked, these flaws could lead to the summer spectacle again disintegrating, as had happened when the Tour was abruptly stricken out of the annual sports calendar starting in 1999 until its revival in 2003.

There's an urgent plea from concerned

sectors. They should prevent another decimated,

if not entirely lame, marnthon bike race, Yes, the flaw in the current Tour may not be as serious and sickening as the rampant cheating that has been confirmed by the

DepEd in the recent Palarong Pambansa. But to countless hopeful souls out in the remote provinces, one year without a Tour

could be equal to being jilted. Dreams, although only seasonal, should not be allowed to slip and fade.

Summer without a colorful Tour could be empty and lonely as a loveless summer.

SPORTS

De Jesus, Yee pull biggest NTCC wins

On Eugene's bedside



foods basketball team was at Eugene bedside Tejada's Monday afternoon at the Makati Medi cal Center where the cager was undergoing a battery of tests to determine the extent of his spinal injury.

The freak acrident that occurred during the last quarter of the game against Red Bull last Sunday initially rendered his body numb, immobilized

from the neck down to his toes. It took 40 nunates before he could be transported to the hospital for treatment because there was no standby ambulance assigned to the

"I didn't want to have him moved unless it was done by paramedics because it might aggravate his injury. Never mind if we had to forfeit the game. A life's at stake here," said Purefoods board representative Rene Pardo, who is set to retire from his post at

Mang Pards said that in disgust he almost kicked a dilapidated mattress which was brought to the court, in place of a stretcher, to move Eugene out so the game could con-

It didn't help any that PBA commissioner Non Eala was not around when the careerthreatening accident-the worst I've seen since the inception of the league in 1975occurred. He had left the venue early, probably tired from his protracted vacation in Boracay where he was stranded for days.

According to Mang Pards, the result of the MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) revealed a fracture and a dislocation in Tejada's spinal column, near the area of the neck. Applying traction has somewhat improved the sensory functions of his upper limbs and body.

The doctors have yet to determine if surgery is indicated, pending further tests.

Upon being apprised of the tragic accident, the Fil-Am's parents who are based in San Francisco, California, immediately booked a flight to Manula. Eugene's father is a former cager himself while his mother is a nurse.

Also constantly at Eugene's bedside is has gudfriend Jenny Hernandez, who works with ABS-CBN

"Kuwento nga ni Jenny, madalas daw sabihin sa kanya ni Eugene lately that he's nomesick and misses his family in America very much. I suppose that's what Eugene has been feeling after the accident, kusi ong umrivok." Mane Pards related.

Jake Aspiras, a supporter of mountaineer Dale Abenojar, denied reports the other day that the climber has abandoned his quest to reach the summit of Mt. Everest

"Speculations that Dave had quit must have started when he crossed paths with the expedition leader of the 7 Summits Club. Dinaanan tang siya, ni hindi huminto para makipagkuwentuhan. Si Dale lang ang bumati. Yun lang. Soon after, word spread like wildfire that Dale had quit," Jake explained.

As of yesterday, Dale was 8,400 meters up on the slopes of Everest, ready to start his assault of the summit. So was Romi Garduce, on the opposite side of the mountain.

"If everything goes well, Dale should be able to conclude his conquest of Everest by this week," Jake said

Vince Fran of La Salle Green Hills and Kevin John Gamboa of Ateneo have been chosen by Adidas Philippines to represent the country in this year's Adidas Superstar Camp which will be staged in China's capital, Beijing, this month.

According to Adidas sports marketing head Goody Custodio, the two belonged to a select group culled from among hundreds of candidates. They were chosen on the recommendation of coacies.

"They belong to the cream of the

crop," Goody said. This year, the world representatives will be shown the way to strength and fitness. "Adidas has a different theme every year. Playing stronger and longer is the theme this year," Goody said.

SPORTSWATCH

70 fights at SJC today

THE BATTLE FOR THE GENTLEMEN COCKERS ASsociation of the Philippines (GCAP) Cocker of the Year little heats up today with the staging of another 5-cock derby at the San Juan Collseum. The 70-flight program is sponsored by Sagupaan Complexor 3000. Rep. Butch Pichay and Rey Briones, with their entry Spartan's Pichay, remained the pacesetter with 24.5 points. Jun Topacio and his American partner Gene Batina of Missisipi (JT Emerald) have 24 points.

Makati hosts 3-cocker

MAKATI COLISEUM'S COCKFIGHTING EVENTS resums today via a special 3-cock derby featuring 60 fights. Sponsor is B-Meg Derby Ace. A guaranteed prize of P200,000 will go the winners of the event being hosted by the WTJ Sports and Amusement Corp. Entry lee is P5.500. Last Monday, the Madiambayan brothers of Pampanga topped the Bacolor Gold 5cock derby when their entry Clear Cut racked up five wins. For inquiries, call 896-3545 or 895-6475.



LYN Mangulabnan of Royal Northwoods plays out of a stymle at the Eagle Ridge Golf Club.

LADIES: Cyria Rodriguez (Föxlora) va Maan Lagaspi (Capitol Hills), Malet Salivio (Againaldo) vs Vinice Godio (Sta. Herra/Ataburg), Kwon Ye Seol (Eagle Ridge) vs Beachte Ablera (Alabang/Tagaylay Midlands), Kathteen Uy (Dabu) vs Lyn Mangulabran (Royal Northwoods)

(MERC Venjo Reyes (Manila Golf) vs Zakly Villa (Valley), Toosle de Jesus (Tagaytay Highlands) vs Oliver Gae (Tagaytay Midlands), Scimund Yee (Manda Southwoods) vs. Indren Maidoo (Alabang), Jan Tambogon (Eagle Ridge) vs park Jong Soc (Eastridge)

By Jong Arcano

GEN. TRIAS, CAVITE-TOOTSIE DE JESUS OF Tagaytay Highlands and Edmund Yee of Manila Southwoods eleed out a pair of victories each yesterday to barge into the quarterfinals even as top seeds Venjo Reyes and Cyna Rodriguez stayed on track in the National Tournament of Club Champions at the Faldo course of the Eagle Ridge Golf and Country Club here.

De Jesus, once a top badminton player who finished seeding round Monday at a lowly No. 13, made shortwork of Baguio bet and No. 20 Bill Lawrence, 7 and 6, in the morning then produced the biggest upset of the tour-ENGAMAZAS TRAINENT CO-presented by Hong Kong and Shanghar Bank.

ing Corp. and Incurrer Golf by oursing second seed Kim Yee-youen of Mimosa, 3 and 2.

Yee disposed of Vai Plata of Summit Point, 3 and 2, in his first match. He went back to his hotel room, took a quick lunch and got his second wind in time to show the door to Kim in a surprising 7 and 6 broodbath.

Zaldy Villa of Valley also shone, stunning pre-tournament favorite, Miko Yee, 1 up.

The other top guns advanced, however, with Reyes of Manila Golf shrugging off a gutsy Rudy Amata of Villamor, 3 and 1, and his counterpart in the ladies division, Rodriguez of Riviera, earning the quickest win of the day a 9 and 7 rout of Iloilo's Maggie Riviera.

Also reaching the round-of-8 were No. 2 Park Jong-soo of Eastridge, Oliver Gan of Tagaytay Midlands, Indren Naidoo of Alabang and Jan Tambogon of Eagle Ridge

The other survivors in the ladies action were Maan Lezasor of Capitol, Mater Salivio of Aguinaldo, Vinice Godio of Alabang and Sta. Elena, Beachie Abiera of Southwoods/TM, Kwon Ye-seul of Eagle Ridge, Kathleen Uy of Cebu CC and Lyn Mangulabnan of Royal Northwoods.

Abiera owned the day's biggest comeback as she rallied from four down to beat Pegels, 2 and 1

Bernis shows way with 71; Villaroman up by

JUN BERNIS FIRED A STEADY ONEunder par 71 and then watched Paul Echavez hole out with a bogey to seize a one-stroke lead at the start of the second leg of the Samsung Amateur Golf Tour at the Summit Pour and Country Club in Li-

Bernis, trying to regain the form that won him two major titles in 2004, birdied back to back from No. 3 but dropped a

hibang standout serried for pars the rest of the way for runes of 35-36.

Echavez burdied No. 17 to carch up with Bernis at one-under, only to fall back again with that bogey on the 18th

South Korean Kim Jong-wook also stayed within striking distance with a 73.

Former RP Ladies champion Carmelette Villaroman shot a 76 to likewise post a one-

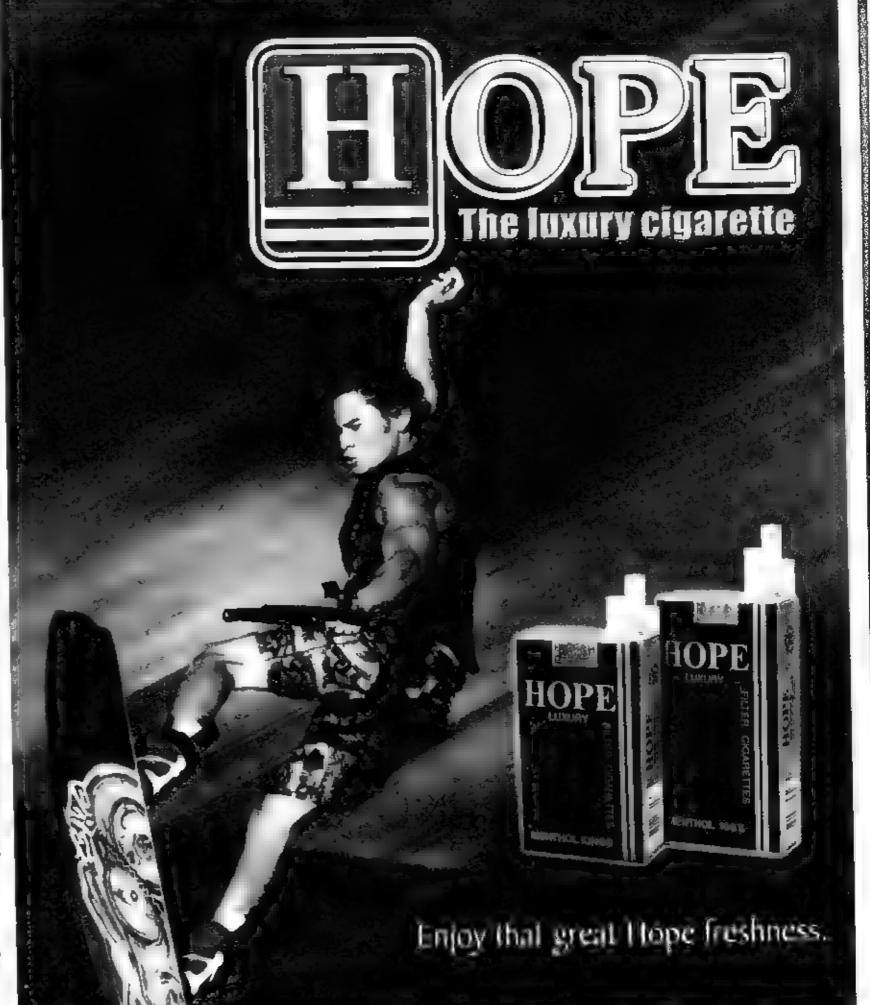
stroke on No. 7. The soft-spoken Can stroke lead over defending national titlist chavez and four up on Lee Sun Ae in Class Beverly Mendoza in the ladies division.

Lucy Landico made a 79 for third. Gary Sales carded a 74 for fourth among men while National Caddies Open champ Joseph Labajo put to naught a 35 going out with a 40 coming in for 75, in a be with Gino Bunyi.

Grace Superal, meanwhile, carded an 81 to gain a two-shot lead over Beth Men-

B, while linez del Rosano showed the way in Class C with a 96 for a three-stroke lead over Felicia Medalla, who had a 99 Mary Dohiling and Josse Amon were ned for third with 101s.

In men's Class C, William McCaw and Pepe Mendoza both shot 82s to share a two-shot lead, while Rolando Bool sizzled with an 86 to lead Class D by five.



Government Warning: Cigarette smoking is dangerous to your health.





Cavs tie series

Mavericks push defending champs Spurs to the edge

CLEVELAND, OHIO—THE CLEVELAND CAVALIERS BEAT THE Detroit Pistons at their own game on Monday, using a smothering defense to win Game Four 74-72 and level their Eastern Conference best-of-seven series at 2-2.

LeBron James and 22 points, time assists and eight rebounds and made two of four free throws as time ticked down. Game Five is on Wednesday in Auburn Hills.

In Dalias, Jason Terry scored 32 points as the Mavericks beat the San Antonio Spurs, 123-118, in overtime, putting the defending NBA champions on the verge of elimination.

Danas leads the Western Conference series, 3-1, with Game Five in that series back in San Antonio on Wedgesday.

Detroit carried a 59-53 lead into the fourth quarter, but the Cavaliers played some of their best defense of the series and ourscored the Pistons 21 13 in the final quarter to steal the win.

The Pistons led by as many as seven early in the fourth quarter, but a 12-0 Cleveland run paved the way for the win, with James getting two chances for two free throws with 1:02 left and again with just 1:3 seconds left on the clock.

"The Pistons are feeling the pressure," James told reporters after the game.

After two relatively easy wins in the opening

two games of the series, the Pistons find themselves in a battle against the underdog Cavs.

Rasheed Wallace, who had guaranteed a win for his Pistons, sprained his right ankle and watched the last few minutes from the bench, but was confident despite the loss.

"There's no way in hell they beat us in a series,"
Wallace said. "They played well. I give them credit.
We loss."

Enc Snow had 12 points for the Cavaliers—10 of them in the second half—and Anderson Varejao

added 10 more.

The Cavaliers fly to St. Louis on Thesday to attend the funeral of Larry Hughes' 20-year-old brother Justin before going on to Detroit. Hughes has missed the Cavs' last two games to be with his

In Dallas, the Mavericks finally prevailed in a game that was tied 20 times and featured eight lead changes during regulation.

Resters

SOLAR SPORTS—New Jersey vs Miami (8 a.m.) SPORTSPLUS—LA Clippers vs Phoenix (10:30 a.m.)



LEBRON James (left) of the Cleveland Cavaliers tries to put up a shot against Ben Wallace (right) of the Detroit Pistons.

WORLD CUP

Argentina leaves off '02 'losers'

LONDON—GONE ARE ARGENTINA'S 2002 losers, tainted by the debacle in Asia four years ago, and in come Jose Pekerman's junior champions

Coach Pekerman, who had already turned a cold shoulder to 2002 captain Juan Sebastian Veron, left out former defense stalwarts Javier Zanetti and Walter Samuel when he named his World Cup squad on Monday.

He picked a squad littered instead with players who have won the World Youth Cup or the Clympic Games gold—and in some cases both.

"This is a very strong group. There's a historic potential and that's because of the richness of Argentine football," Pekerman told a news conference in Buenos Aires when he named his squad.

The only players in Pekerman's squad who went to Asia in 2002 under his predecessor Marcelo Bielsa are Roberto Ayala, who saw no action in his second World Cup because of injury, mudfielders Pablo Aimar and Juan Pablo Sorin, both key figures in Pekerman's successful jumor teams, and striker Herman Crespo, a reserve in Japan

Pekerman's new guard, looking to win the World Cup for Argentina for the third time, is led by Sorin and Juan Roman Riquelme. Reuters

UEFA final on ESPN

Meanwhile another marquee matchup beckons with European club soccer's most glittering

Spanish powerhouse Barcelona clashes with English side Arsenal as the UEFA Champions League Finals goes underway tomorrow at 2

a.m. live and exhusive on ESPN.

Arsenal booked its place in the Champions
League final with a 1-0 aggregate win over
Spain's Villareal. Barceiona is the odds-on favorite to lift the trophy behind World Pootbalier
of the Year Ronaldinho.

Angping bats for new Asaphil election, Open

IT WAS HARRY ANGPING'S TURN AT bat vesterday.

Branding the recent elections of the Amateur Softball Association of the Philippines as "illegal, null and void," Angping said he's still the Asaphil president and will can for another national election and

national open next month.

The former Manila congressman, who has been "ousted" by a faction of the Asaphil, which elected former Asaphil chief Mario Raymundo back in the post, said the national open and the elections are set June 9-12 at the Rosario Sports

Complex in Pasig City.

Angping, however, said, he will no longer run for another term and instead nominated businessman Jean Henri Lhuillier to take his post.

"Due to the recent developments, we have decided to move the national open to

give everybody the chance to participate," said Angping.

Angping, who became Asaphil president in 2002, dubbed the coming national open, as the Philippine Independence Cup, adding that it would involve at least

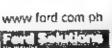


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'Are you

By Nini Valera

THIS IS ONE QUESTION THAT FORMER MTV VJ Donita Rose has to answer almost every time she boards a cab in Singapore where she and her husband, Eric Villarama, and their son Joshua Paul reside

"I have to explain to the cab driver that not all Filipinas in Singapore are maids," she said. "It happens to me so often (being mistaken for a maid), that I no longer get offended."

Donita, 32, has been shuttling between Singapore and Manila for eight years now, but it was only after she got married, three years ago, that she became a permanent resident of the island nation. The Villaramas now own a flat in one of the pridevelopments vate there.

As permanent residents, the family enjoys "perks" from the govemment, including the Central Provident Fund: 18 percent of one's earnings go to a sort of government trust (and matched by the government) as a form of forced savings or retirement fund.

"That's [good] for family," said Donitz. 'I strongly beheve in saving for the future"

It's neither a perfect life, nor one thar's mostly easy. Like most 16 Table 18 gapore, Donita has expenenced some form of discrimination.

"Oh, we've had our share of that," she said, speaking for her husband as well as for her self "Even when I was still with MTV some DONITA Rose





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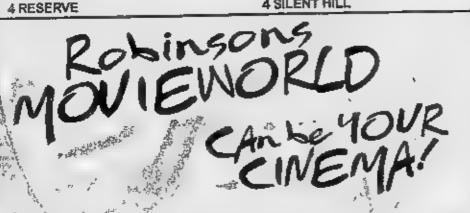
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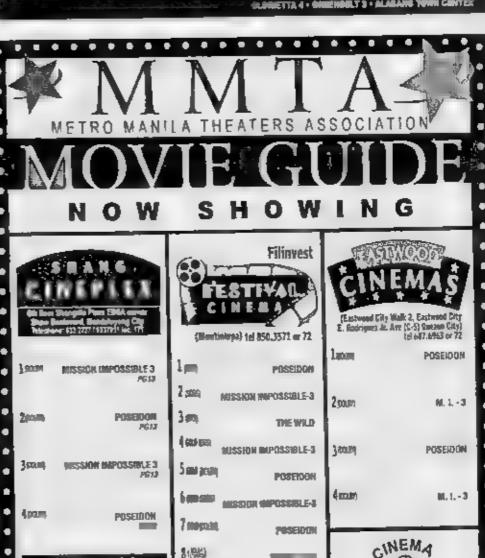
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A2-2

PHILIPPINE DAILY INOUTRER— ENTERTAINMENT

It has happened to her so many times, Donita says, that she no longer gets offended







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WEDNESDAY, MAY 17, 2006

Are

From page A2-1

people looked down on me."

But to her about 136,000 compatriots there, Donita-an actress and TV personality before she became a V.)-has dearly become a pleasant remunder of the country they left behind, if not altogether an inspira-

She related an uncident when a cab driver took her to a shopping mail near the park one Sunday, a day off for most Filipmo maids. "I was not yet so popular then as a VJ. But when I stepped out of the cab. Filipinos recognized me and started calling my name. Hundreds of them rushed to come near me. I got scared. I thought there was going to be a stainpede. Call me mayabong or what. But that's what I thought would happen. So I jumped back into the cab and had the driver take me some place eise."

Sadness

Through all the excitement, Donita said, she had felt their sadness. It was a sadness she knew well, and one that she still feels every time she's away from home. Since she became host of GMA 7's "Mobile Kusina," for example, Donita had not seen her family for a month.

"I miss my son very much," she admitted. 'My husband sends me pictures everyday. Plus, I web chat with him at the end of each day [so] it's been bearable "

Today, father and son are expected to arrive in Manila, and Donita is looking forward to that. "We've postponed mother's tay to next Sunday" she said. "We're celebrating it on the show; Eric will be my guest. We'll both be cooking."

Salad freak

Donita, a confessed a salad freak, said she's excited about the concoctions that she and Eric are serving up for the show. She confessed that she learned to really cook only after getting married, outside of occasional forays into the kitchen as a young girl.

She recalled, would save my allowance and cook something—usually American food-for the family for a special occasion. Since then, I've experimented a lot. But I've learned much in Singapore. I used to need cookbooks, now, I can do away with them."

Binay, Biazon...

From page A2-6

firmed that she'll soon tie the knot with her badminton in-STRUCTOR Wilfredo "Jun" Hinahon

Just what kooky Ai-Ai needs: A man whose name literally means "calm."

Cloud nine

At a press con-okay this is two years ago but it still bears recounting-Inimitable Melania Marquez praised a colleague: "He has cloud in the industry)"

Silence. "You Cloud!"

know?

ENTERTAINMENT

OPENING THIS WEEK

The Da Vinci Code

Stars Tom Hanks. Audrey Tauton, lan McKellen, Jean Reno

Directed by Ron Howard

Based on Dan Brown's worldwide bestseller that has sold 20 million copies and has been translated Into 42 languages, this suspense thriller has sparked

as much interest as controversy. Producer Brian Grazer reports that he has received "numerous suggestions and warnmgs from. fans not to compromise the novel's integrity specifically. not to water down the conspiracy at its center" Critics have denounced the movie as "poisonous fuel for anti-Catholic sentiment."

All this noise for a murder mystery? A Louvre curator is killed, ump-starting an investigation that can ead a symbologist

(Hanks) and a cryptographer (Tautou) to "Bricover a secret that has been protected since the days of Christ "

Richard Horgan of www.filmstew.com.says, "People love a good detective story. In essence it is the very idea of 'Da Vinci Code' that offends people." The movie is supposed to open today, but Columbia Pictures says. "within the week"

Over the Hedge With the voices of Bruce Willis, Garry Shandling, William Shalner, Allison Janney Directed by Tim Johnson and Karey Kirkpatrick

Yet another CG creature-cartoon from the Dreamworks factory, this one has an environmental message. A clan of critters (porcupines, possums, a squirrel, skunk, tortoise and chipmunk) wakes up from a winter slumber, only to discover their forest turned into a suburban housing project. A "rascally" raccoon agitates

and organizes the dispossessed animals, who strike back by raiding the humans' food supply Naturally, the humans put up their own offensive fight back, resulting in merry mayhem. Kirk Honeycutt of Hollywood Reporter describes it as "chirpy fun." Todd McCarthy of Variety is unimpressed. "[11] tacks the inventiveness, wit and sense at delight that have distlaguished" previous movies of this genre Joshua Tyler of Cinemablend com thinks it's "curte, clever . succinct and sweet." Opens May 19.



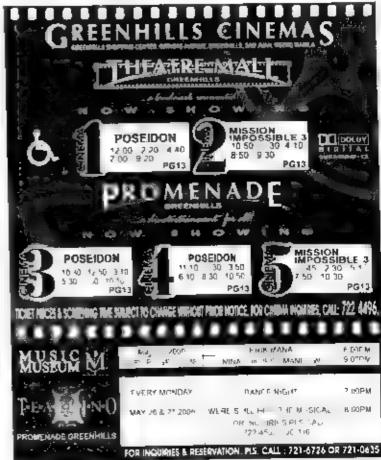
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Get a coupon for every 2 tickets purchased at Glorietta and Greenbelt Cinemas and drop in dropboxes. Hurryl Watch a movie now!

> Promo ends on May 19, 2006 Per DTI-HCR Permit No. Al-200, Series of 2006 France .

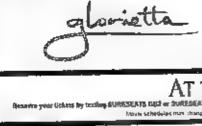


















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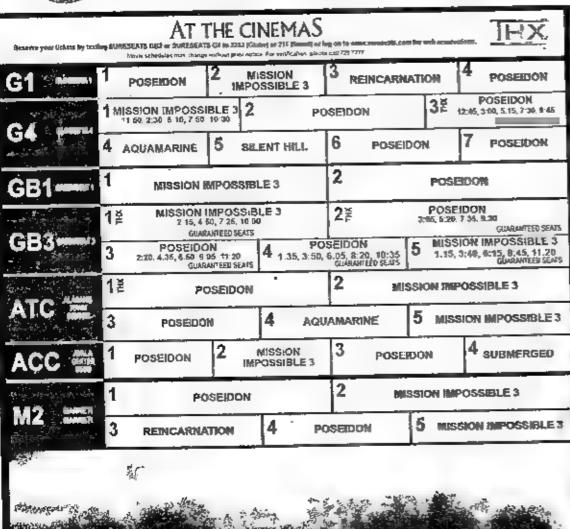
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MTECH Review PG-11

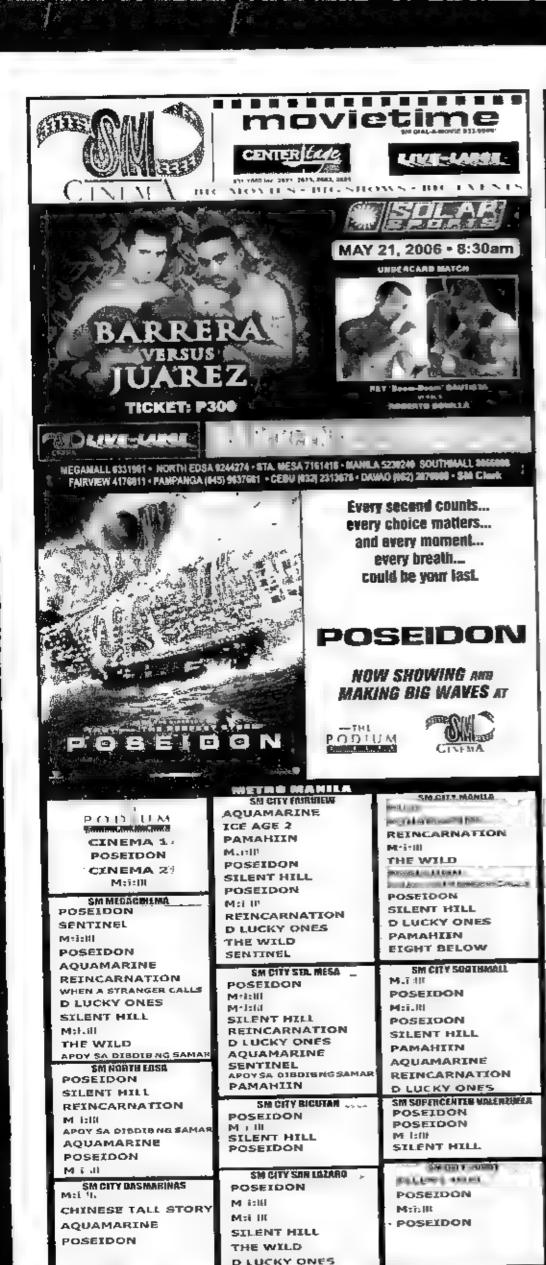
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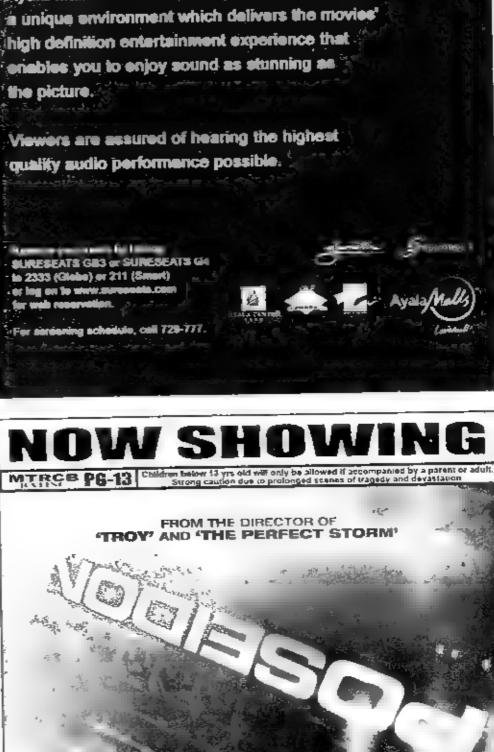
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WEDNESDAY,

MAY 17, 2006

FEEDBACK

Kaye

tralia)" is Pilipino. His name is Michael, he's

A2-4

Pinoy in BB

Western Australia

(mkms 26@yahoo.com)

One of the housemates

in Big Brother (Aus-

Australia

From

POSEIDON

12:10, 2:35, 5:01, 7:25, 9:50

MISSION

IMPOSSIBLE 3

1:35, 4:39, 7:25, 18:30

PG-13

POSEDON

12:50, 2:15, 5:00, 8:16, 18:36

From page A2-6

enough for viewers to feel for them. This is a park since the movie's actors do work so hard to benevably cope with all those dangers.

We also wonder why the "suicidal" character played by Richard Dreyfuss quackly opts to fight for his life, despite its emptiness. And the and the same of and the research Jimmy Bennett is too placky for comfort.

It's a good thing that Alexand hard harely are able to impue men roles with sufficient fear and doubt to render them more human and flawed than the others.

They, at least, give us the feeling that we're watching fleshand-blood people at nsk, instead of survivors so meluctably blessed by the whamsical gods of luck and pruck

'The Lake House'

Sandra Bullock and Keanu Reeves are reunited in "The Lake SHOULD SHOW SHOW al romantic movie. In the film, Dr. Kate (Bullock) Forester leaves the lovely ake house she has been renting. She leaves a note for the house's next tenant, requesting and the Court of the man to her new agdress. But when the new tenant, Alex Burnham (Reeves) arrives, he sees a very different picture: the lake house is duty and overgrown with weeds. Whar's going on here?

As Kate and Alex continue to correspond, it becomes clear that they are, incredibly, living two years apart, each at a time in their lives when they are struggung with past disappointments and trying to make a fresh start. Will they ever bridge the psychic distance between them?

'Invincible'

More than six months after the release of his sophomore album, "Completery," Christian Bautista has come out with the CD's new single, "Inv ncible." The song has been climbing up the charts of Magic 89 9 Mellow Touch 94 7 Monster Radio RX 93 1, 97 1 WLS FM and 99.5 RT And the video has topped both MYX and MTV charts.

The Omen

Kathryn Thorn (Julia Stiles) and her husband Robert (Liev 6 m ber) are the adoptive parents of lit tie Damien in 'The Omen." He looks deceptively innocent, so they're unaware of the and the prophesied Anti-Christi



SM CITY CEDI M (*III POSEIDON SUBMERGED GRANDMA'S BOY THE DARK D LUZCKY ONES Milliant POSEIDON

POSETDON

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AQUAMARINE

SUBMERGED

SM CITY HACOOR PAMAHIIN

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MAY 20, 2006

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EMEGR -

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THE WILD

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THE WILD

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STLENT HILL

AQUAMARINE

Tickets at (P180, P260, P380)

D LUCKY ONES RESERVED POSEIDON Michigan SUBMERGED AQUAMARINE RESERVED AMERICAN SOLDIER POSEIDON SHE'S THE MAN D LUCKY ONES THE WILD BANDIDAS Mai.III

. EM CITY CACOURS POSEIDON SUMERGED SENTINEL



CINEMA

NOW OPEN

DIMATION OF MILAT IS NO WIN 19 SA INC. SEN UNIXE SCHEDULES AND THE ALLS FRAMPENDING AT SMEETING W

BY JESS ABRERA

BY PM. JUNIOR

FOXTROT



TWO WEEKS WITHOUT WARGUEST" ISN'T GOING TO KILL YOU.



CAN I AT LEAST MUCH-LOG ON AND MEEDED 10YE MY ORC? SANETY, I LEFT HIM BY THE IN THE MISTY WAY MARSH WITHOUT AN UMBRELLA.

BY BILL AMEND A UPIN



MARVIN



YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO START DOING ALL OF THE HOUSEWORK



BY JERRY SCOTT

PUGAD BABOY



BABY BLUES



MANGE NO BARN COME ON WANDA. OF COURSE SHE DOESN'T LOVE ME DNYMORE! LONES YOU!



However, we could

MUTTS





ATOMO AND WEBOY



HI MY FRIENDS SAY TOO MUCH GOSSIP IS HARMFUL TO ONE'S HEALTH IS THAT TRUE ?

I'M SORRY BUT WE ARE ONLY ALLOWED TO GIVE GOSSIP NOT OPINIONS

START RUMORS IF YOU WANT

BY LYRA GARCELLANO DIVINE COMEDY

MIKROKOSMOS



let there be open ANG MGA MON TINA-TAGO LANG ANG TAKOT SA EXPOSE SOM, BRINGITON



BY STEVEN PABALINAS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're rebellious and outspoken. You have a heartfelt appreciation of art and beauty. You're not casual about what is important to you. You embrace your personal causes with enthusiasm. People know they can count on you. Around the age of 44, you become increasingly interested in creating a beautiful home for yourself for years. An important choice awaits you this year. Choose wisely, Birthdate of Bob Saget, actor; Enya, singer; Dennis Hopper, actor



ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Be patient with others this morning breakfast or on the way to work. It's easy to overreact. If you do, you will likely regret it later. Today improves as it



GEMINI (May 21 to Conflict 20) June about shared possessions is likely this morning. "That's mine." "No it's not." "Yes it is!" "No it isn't!" Avoid these squabbles. Everything mellows out later today.



LEO (July 23 to Aug 22) Apply yourself daligently at work today, and you will be so pleased with what you get done. In fact, you'll be down-



.. PERD ANG GOOD NEWS NAMAN, MUKHANG HINDI KA NA MAGKAKA-PIMPLES PA WOW! TALAGA. poc? 00



wears on

TAURUS (Apri) 20 to May 20): Don't jump to conclusions this morning if others have a point of view you don't like Let sleeping dogs lie. Late in the day, life picks up with a



CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Today's Moon opposes your sign as well as fiery Mars. This could cause explosions in the morning. Your best bet is to be patient and tolerant. Demonstrate grace under pressure.



VFRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Be patient with children early this morning and at breakfast. Anger and yelling are terrible ways to start the day.

(The worst!) This day gets better as

BEN







DAILY CROSSWORD

1 Office subs 8 Dance, film, 10 Red planet

nice positive energy.

- 14 Walled City near Madrid 15 Hall an Island? 16 Arabian quif 17 Broom made of
- 18 "Nane" star
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- DOWN 1 Bar bill 2 Holiday lead-in
- Kentucky Derby winner) 3B Yucky

By Philip J. Anderson

Portland, OR 3 Invalid judicial

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- brand 59 Faucet problem 60 1/16 ounce 84 Beer's lab

65 Part of CBS?

58 Pandepole

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) Be patient with perents, bosses and authority figures, especially this morning. You're tempted to fose your cool. Remember You don't like disharmony



учитасто опа чентотом вив чет SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You might be upset about finances or your personal possessions this morning.

body else

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19) You'll feel highly emotional about something that happens this morning. Don't get your belly in a rash. By the end of the day, you feel compiecely different

Don't take it out on any

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18). Something is bothering you. It's brewing on the back burners of your mind. Try not to give it too much thought. By this evening, you feel much, much better.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You might feel upset with a friend or a member of a group today, especially this morning, it's more important to keep friends. Be patient until you have calmed down later to-

KIKO MACHINE



AT FRUSTRATED ARTIST DIN BALA sheke how SABAGAY, COME TO THINK OF IT, FRUSTRATED MUSICIAN DIN PALA APD TSAKA FRUSTRATED ACTOR hehe ..



LOVEKNOTS

SCARLET MELADIE PHAKA-CABI SA LIBERISE DA VINCI CODE, PARANG LETTER DAW AND PAGRAKA PUESTO NI DA VIDE MARY MAGDALEUS AT NI PARANG M





TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMS LING



MOMMY, BAKIT KAHIT BOTO PO AKO, E, KULUBOT NA RIN ANG BOLDT KO TULDOMOS

NTERTAINMEN

Too plucky for comfort

IN 1972, "THE POSEIDON ADVENTURE" helped launch the "disaster wave" in the movies. In 1997, the similarly waterlogged "Titanic" became the most profitable film ever made. A few years ago, "The Perfect Storm" also did well. And now, in 2006, "Poseidon" makes its bid for supremacy at the box office. What are the "wet and wild" film's prospects?

On point of visual chills and thrills, the remake of "The Poseidon Adventure" more than passes muster. The performances of its lead players are also appropriately intense and committed. But the movie falters in the areas of plot, believability and empathy.



Nestor U. Torre

The story in capsule form: A New Year's Eve party is in full swing in a luxury liner's huge bailroom-but the revelry abruptly and tragically ends when a towering "rogue wave" slams into the 20-story vessel and rolls it completely upside-down.

A few hundred survivors decide to await rescue in the hermetically-sealed ballroom, but a handful of brave souls opt to look for an escape route. They are divided for their "rash" decision, but it's spot-on, because the ballroom soon turns out to be not as impregnable as expected.

Led by a professional gambler (played by Josh Lucas), the "escapees" claw their way up the ship's bowels, hoping to crawl to safety through the vessel's propeller maintenance shafts.

Challenges and life-threatening events continually test their resolve, but with God's grace, incredible luck and a very obliging team of scriptwriters, they do get rescued at the film's final

The fact that everything happens inside the ship limits the production's eventful progression.

It's also impossibly fortunous that the survivors manage to find their way through the ship's circuitous maze of dead ends and wreckage strewn

After the nth "lucky" break, the viewer ceases to suspend his disbelief, from sheer overload of cockeyed optimism and blatant coincidence

The visually exciting movie devotes so much of its running time to its many dangers and facile sobutions that it doesn't limin its characters well

TOO PLUCKY/A2-4



Binay, Biazon & Bayani

"TOTOO TV" HOSTS ARIEL younger Answer: "A, oo. and Maverick name theur wackiest interviewees thus far Binay, Biazon and Bayani.

They asked Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay if be ever had his sunkissed skin bleached. Answer: "I should try that." They asked Sen. Rodoifo Biazon if he shampooed his hair. Answer: "Not anymore," Did he ever have louto? Answer: "Hindi na- MELANIE Marquez man."

They asked MMDA chair Bayanı Fernando if he ever made boso when he was

Umakyat pa ako sa puno."

Like minds

Are you wondering what makes newlyweds Snooky and Niño Mendoza tick?

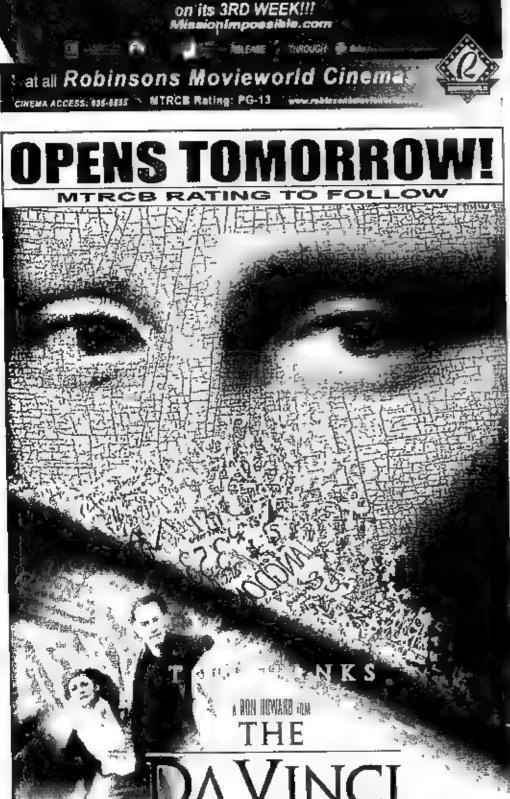
Just watch the greenhorn groom's next interview and see for yourself that they are on the same wavelength. Tuned in Like minds

Wedding belle

Al-Ai de las Alas has con-

B:NAY/ A2-2





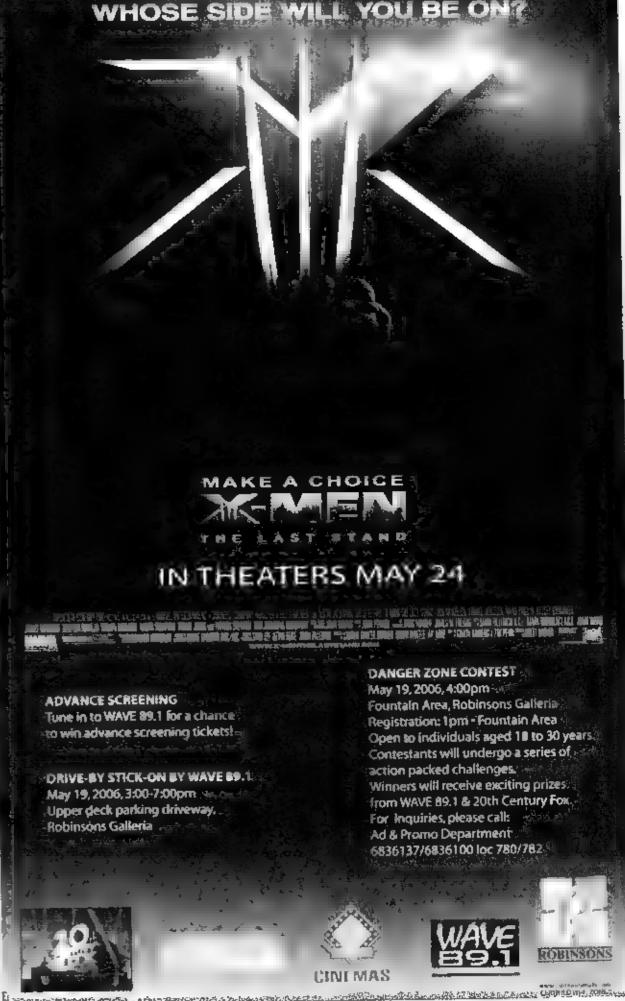
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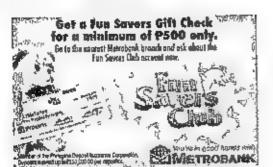
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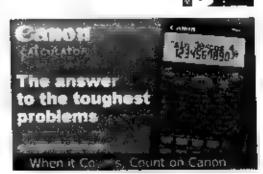




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Taxt us your teelfback: inquirer biz name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart) E-mail: pr_business@inquirer.com.ph



Japan firm plans P5-B coco facility in RP

600,000 hectares to be needed for coconut plantation

By Christine A. Gaylican

TOYO ENGINEERING CORP. (TEC) OF JAPAN IS PLANNING TO put up an integrated facility in northern Luzon to produce the biofuel coconut methyl esther, the head of the Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA) said yesterday.

The project is estimated to require close to PS billion in investments.

Officials of Toyo Engineering were looking at planting new coconut trees on some 600,000 hectares, with the yields to be transformed to coconut methyl eather for export to Japan, said newly installed PCA Administrator Oscar G. Garin.

Japan now widely uses methyl eather as fuel or fuel additive.

"They (Toyo Engineering Corp.) have consult ed the agency as to how they could develop the project, which could give our replanting program a boost," Garin said. "Toyo Engineering currently has a temporary facility and conducts INSIDE

Gov't debt stood at P3.96T in end-Feb /834

Gov't to borrow P104.5B in Q3 😘

Smart seeks tax perks for 3G project

By Daxim L. Lucas

THE COUNTRY'S BIGGEST CELLULAR PHONE firm would spend as much as P14 6 billion for its third-generation wireless network-almost thrice that of its closest rival—over the next three years, company officials said.

Speaking to reporters on Tuesday, Smart Communications Inc. chief financial officer Anabelle L. Chua said the amount was an "aggressive" estimate that the company would present before the Board of Investments in applying for a tax holiday package.

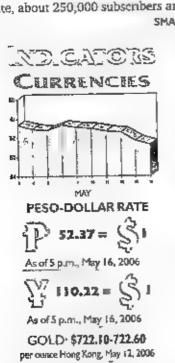
Despite its bigger investment, however, Smart was beaten to the punch by Globe, which was granted a P2.5 billion tax incentive earlier this month for its pioneering efforts in setting up a 3G network in the country.

Globe had pegged its investment in the new technology at P5.48 billion.

Chua said that Smart's investment in 3G might rise to as much as P32 billion over the next six years, depending on how the service is received by the market

"This will be funded with internally generated funds," she said, aithough a "small portion" of about 30 percent may come in the

To date, about 250,000 subscribers are us-SMART/B4





(See stock market report on Page 82) Shares close 0.88% higher

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 0.88-PERCENT higher yesterday after nvestors picked up bargains following two consecutive sessions

of heavy losses, dealers said. They also said investors in general appeared to be satisfied with the strong profit results of most blue chips for the three months to March, and were optimistic that the trend would continue for the rest of the year

The composite index added 21 46 points to 2,460.19 after trading between 2,415.78 and 2,466.24. The broader all-shares Index gained 7 52 points to 1,527.46. Losers outnumbered gainers 60 to 46, while

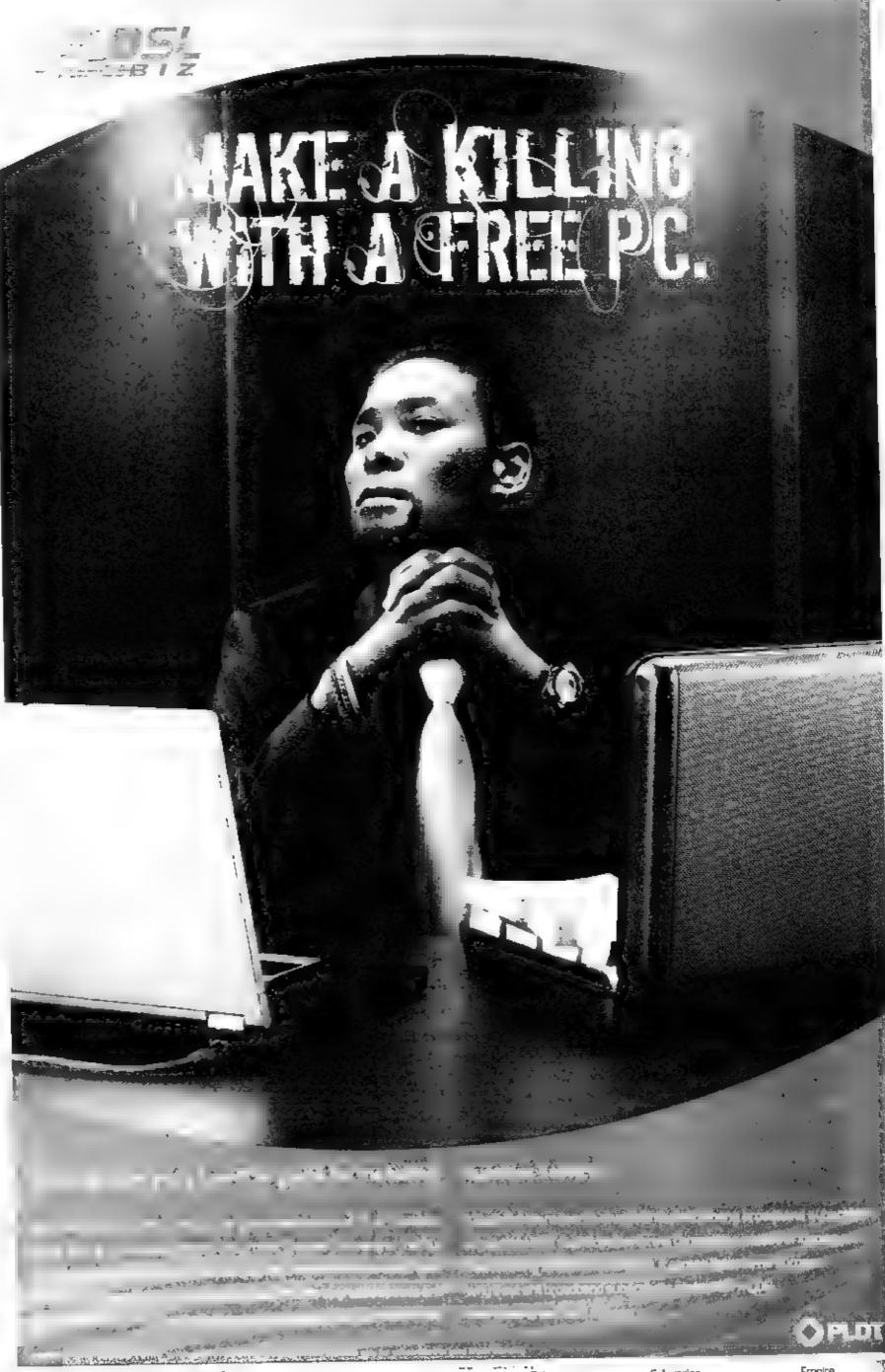
47 stocks were unchanged. Volume reached 2.68 billion shares worth P2.07 billion. "Bargain-hunting has emerged after the

steep correction " said Astro del Castillo of First Grade Holdings The main index had shed 4.4 percent over

its two-day decline. "After recent sharp swings, the market may go into consolidation and let the buils

rest," De: Castillo added Gains in Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co boosted the market's rise. It ended up P40 to P2,110. Rival Globe Telecom gained P25 to P995. Top-traded Ayala Corp. ended P2 50 lower at P420.

San Miguel-A was unchanged at P64, while its "B" shares were down 50 centavos



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BUSINESS

JG Summit profit up 417% to ₱3.88B

Sale of URC shares boosted revenues

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

GOKONGWEI LED JG SUMMIT Holdings Inc. said yesterday its net income surged 417 percent in the first quarter to P3.88 billion from the previous year's P750.4 million, boosted by the sale of shares in branded foods unit Universal Robina Corp

of its common shares to international and local investors.

-URC's major shareholders—JG Summit Holdings Inc., Express Holdings Inc. and Robinsons Supermarket Corp.—raised some P7 billion from the sale of their shares in the branded foods company.

the Philippine Stock Exchange, JG Summit said that without the onetime gain, net income would still have grown 17.7 percent to P674.8 million from P573.2 million.

higher by 45.9 percent at P23.54 billion from P16.13 billion last year, boosted by the company's Last Pebruary, URC completed core businesses such as foods and a primary and secondary offering real estate development, as well as revenues from petrochemicals.

Interest income from various investment portfolios also boosted the company's revenues, reflecting a 74.8-percent growth to P1 59 billion

Not all business units, however, registered a rosy picture as ser- charges incurred in the first quar- cera from last year's P328.0 million.

Philippine National Bank

NOTICE OF ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING

National Bank will be hald on May 30, 2006 at 5:00 a.m. at the Baltroom, Upper Lobby,

Century Park Hotel, 599 Pablo Ocempo Sr. St., Metete, Manile.

Secretary's Proof of Notice and Quorum

Approval of the 2005 Annual Report

The Agenda for the meeting is as follows.

on May 24, 2005

Election of Directors

Appointment of External Auditor

Notice is hereby given that the Annual Meeting of Stockholders of the Philippine

Approval of the Minutes of the 2005 Annual Stockholders' Meeting held

Report of the President on the Results of Operations for the Year 2005

Approval of the Amendment to the Amended By-Laws (transfer of the

Ratification of All Acts, Resolutions and Proceedings of the Board of

Directors and Corporate Officers since the 2005 Annual Stockholders'

position, powers and duties of the Chamman of the Board in Sections 6.1

and 6.3, Article VI captioned "Officers" to Section 5.4, Article V captioned

In a financial report filed with vice revenues from the company's telecommunications

dropped by 6 percent. Revenues from the textile business also decreased by 25 percent.

Gross profit for the first quarter Consolidated revenues were hit P5.5 billion, higher by 13 percent. But rising costs of services in the air transportation and mobile phone businesses limited the growth of gross margins. Operating expenses swelled 24.5 percent to P4.97 billion from P3.99 billion.

Costs related to operating the mobile phone business and air transportation, as well as the expansion of the firm's foods business in Asia, all contributed to the growth in casts.

Financing costs and other

ter was up 37.3 percent to P2.25 billion this year. The increase in the level of the company's financial debt contributed to higher finance costs.

URC posted consolidated net sales of P9.2 billion for the three months ended Dec. 31, 2005, a 21.7-percent increase over the same period of last year. This was driven by the growth in branded consumer foods.

Robinsons Land Corp. recorded gross revenues of P1.72 billion for the first quarter of its fiscal year 2006, up by 38 percent from last year's P1.25 billion. Net income for the three months ended Dec. 31 stood at P419 million, up by 28 per-

in 1st quarter

By Daxim L Lucas

GOKONGWEI-CONTROLLED Telecommunications Phils, Inc. reversed its fortunes in the first quarter of 2006, managing to eke out a profit of P43.2 milhon compared with a net loss of P451.2 million in the

In a disclosure to corporate regulators, Digitel said its bottom line was boosted by an increase in the number of subscribers for the

"Digitel expects to further improve results

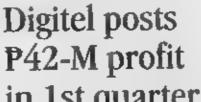
communication services posted an increase of P20.1 million to P750.2 million from P730

its wireline data communication services posted an increase of P4.5 million or 7 per-

The increase in these business segments was brought about by the increase in the subscriber base arising from the successful launch of 24/7 unlimited product variants and the competitive rates of the wireline data

The company has slightly more than million subscribers for its Sun Cellular service, which lags a poor third behind industry giants Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., with its Smart and Piltel brands, and

"However, the increases were tempered by lower wireline voice communication service and wireless non-service revenue," the com-



same period last year.

"24/7" service of its Sun Cellular brand.

of operation as it continues to expand the wireless network, introduce new and innovative products, and implement cost-containment measures to further reduce its costs and expenses," the company added in its report to the Securities and Exchange Commission.

In the first quarter, Digitel registered a 30.7percent increase in its consolidated revenues m P3.12 billion from P2.38 billion a year ago.

Among the business segments, the wireless million last year, it said.

cent to P72.1 million from P67.7 million

communication services," Digitel said.

Giobe Telecom Inc.

ISM Co Music S Phirmb

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ABS-4

May 16, 2006

United States

Hong Kong

Switzerland

Canada

Singapore

Bahrain

Indonesia

Thailand

Malaysia

Horway

Pakistan

New Zealand

South Africa

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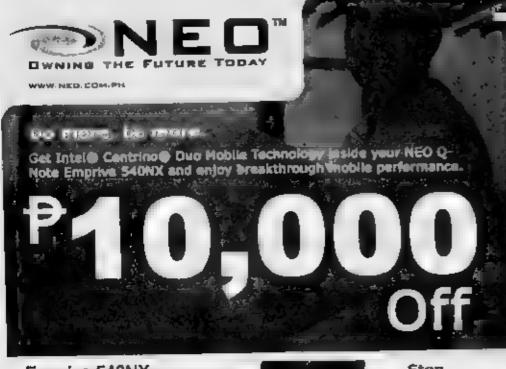
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Other Matters 10. Minutes of the 2005 Annual Stockholders' Meeting as well as resolutions of the Board of Directors from May 25, 2005 with be available for examination during office hours at the Office of the Corporate Secretary. Only stockholders of record as of May 2, 2006 will be entitled to notice and vote at this meeting. Registration will begin at 5:00 a.m. If you cannot personally attend the meeting, you may designate your authorized representative by submitting a PROXY to the than 5:00 p.m. on May 25, 2006. Any proxies so received will be validated on May 26, 2006, 9:30 e.m., at the Office of the Stock Transfer Agent at Allied Bank Center, 6754 Ayala Avenue, Makati City. Pasay City, March 24, 2006 NATO X FERNANDEZ Comorate Secretary





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BUSINESS

Gov't debt stood at P3.96T in end-Feb

By Michelle V. Remo

THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT'S debt stood at P3 96 trillion as of end-February, unchanged from the previous month's level as the additional borrowings undertaken in the second month were simply off set by the declining effects of a stronger peso on foreign habilities.

The debt figure was an accumulated amount of borrowings that the government undertook over the past years to cover expenditure requirements that could not undertaken through the regular isbe accommodated by its revenues. suance of treasury bills and bonds. The government also borrows to pay maturing obligations.

Documents from the Bureau of the Treasury showed that of the debt, domestic loans accounted for P2 17 billion, up by a measly 0.5 percent from the previous month's figure. The Treasury said higher volume of government se-

curities issued in February.

Foreign borrowings, on the other hand, stood at PLS billion, dropping by 0.6 percent from PLSI bilbon a month ago. The Treasury attributed the decline in external debts to the appreciation of the peso from January to February.

The Treasury also said foreign debt declined because the government paid more maturing external obligations than it borrowed during the month

Domestic borrowings are mostly Poreign borrowings come from either the sale of sovereign bonds in the international market or official development assistance provided by multilateral and bilateral agencies.

The country's biggest sources of ODA include the Japan Bank for international Cooperation, the slight increase was due to the the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank.



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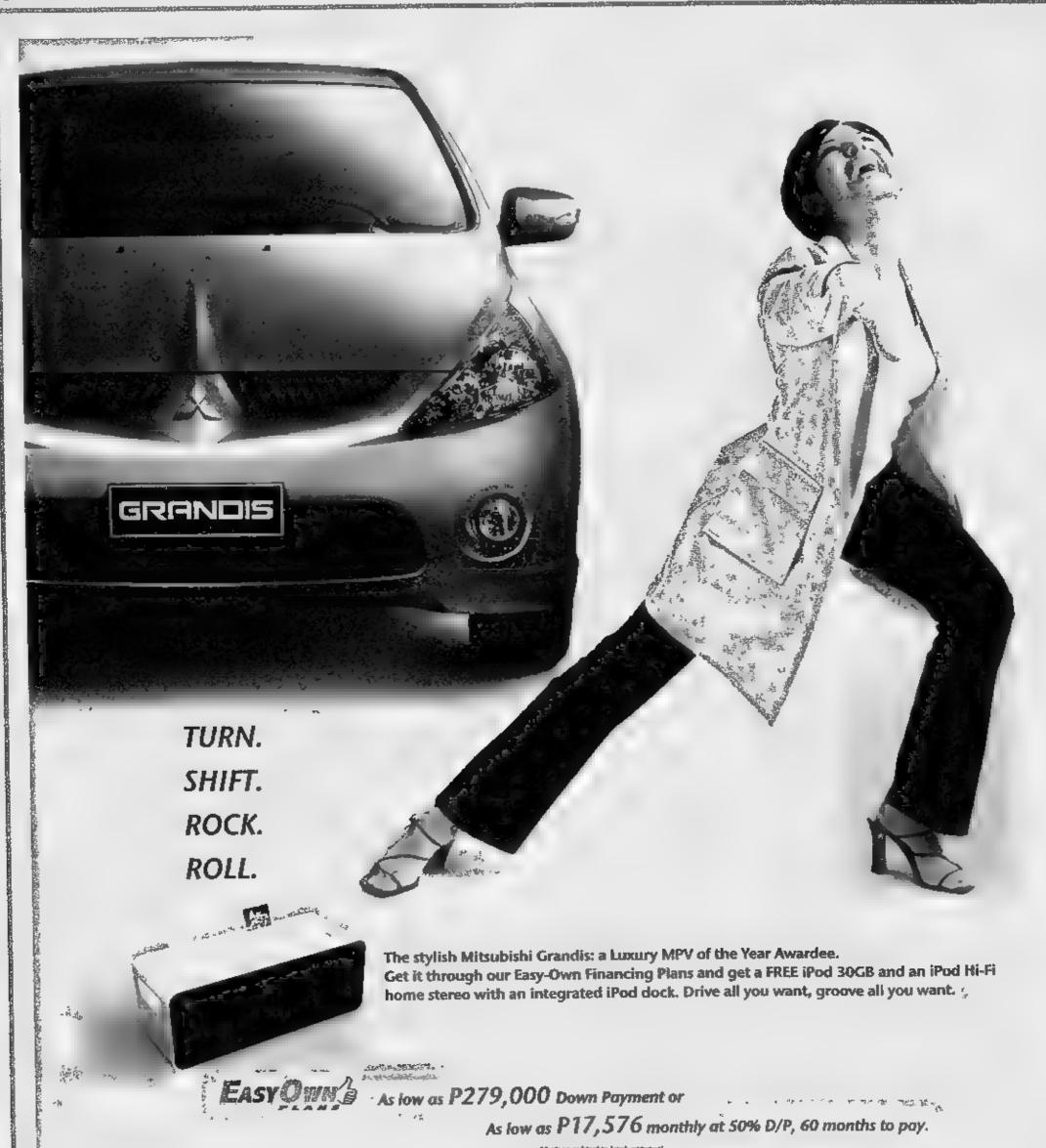
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BCDA to bid out 6-hectare prime lot in Fort Boni

Terms of sale readied; auction to be set soon

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE BASES CONVERSION DEVElopment Authority (BCDA) is set to auction a 6-hectare lot in front of a police school north of Port Bonifacio In Taguig City, said BCDA president Narciso Abaya.

In an interview after Monday's press conference held by Fort Bonifacio Development Corp., Abaya said the government had been preparing the terms of the bidding and that it might possibly sell the property within this year or next

Ahaya refused to divulge the value of the property or the expected proceeds from the sale, saying he would only give the details of the plan when the bid terms were completed

He, however, said sales proceeds would be earmarked for the modernization program of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the conversion of former military bases such as Clark Air Base, Subic Naval Base, John Hay and Poro point into industrial and logistics hubs, as provided by Philip-

BCDA is also preparing for the sale of residential lots in Fort Bonifacto that are currently occupied by ranking and retired officers of the

This will be pursued despite pending cases that seek to determine the true owners of the lots which, according to an earlier appraisal, could fetch P30,000 per square meter.



BCDA last month invited appraisal firms to submit bids for the contract mvolving these lots.

The lots include 35.5 hectares in the Joint United States Military Advisory Group (Justnag) property, occupied by the Southside Homeowners Association Inc. (SHAI); 25.8 hectares occupied by the Navy Officers Village Association Inc. (Novai), and 33.6 hectares that presently house military facilities.

BCDA is authorized by law to convert former military base lots in Metro Manda into commercial/industrial/residential property for civil-

The law (RA 7227, enacted in

1992) also states that 32.5 percent of the proceeds should be used for "the transfer of the AFP military camps and the construction of new camps, the modernization of the AFR the concessional and long-term housing loan assistance and livelihood assistance to AFP officers and enlisted men and their families, and the rehabilitation and expansion of the AFP medical facilities."

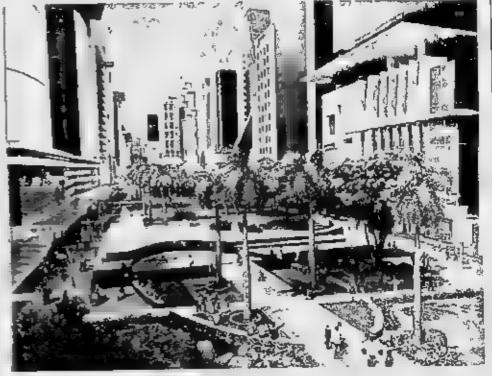
Based on a previous valuation, the Justinag and Noval areas could fetch at least P18.4 billion in revenues for the government.

The 6.6-hectare North Bonifacio property that would be sold forms part of the 15 hectares of prime Fort Bonifacto land that the BCDA was planning to privatize this year.

BCDA vice president for corporate planning Aileen Zosa earlier said the property to be privatized this year also included an 8.5hectare lot in the northern Central **Business District**

Both lots are located north of S&R Price Mart, near the Fort Bonifacio Gate 1 along JP Rizal avenue Its neighboring lot is a 10.5hectare property owned by Metro

As early as October last year, major developers and certain embassies had expressed their interest in these prime pieces of property. These included the SM Group, Ayala Land, Fort Bonifacio Development Corp., the Robinsons Group and Megaworld



BGC RETAIL PROMENADE

An artist's perspective of the BGC retail promonade, the focal point of the city center of Fort Bonifacio Global City. It will be a linear park lined by two boulevards of innovative

Port privatization pushed

By Ronnel W. Domingo

PRIVATE SECTOR GROUPS AND PORT users yesterday said they wanted the government to immediately privatize the Manila North Harbor through a public bidding and a multi-operator scheme.

This was according to the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Export Development Council, Distribution Management Association of the Philippines and the Coalition for Ports and Shipping Modernization.

Donald G. Dee, PCCI president, said the groups needed to clarify things because of conflicting statements they have issued recently.

"PCCI has written a letter to the Philippine Ports Authority recommending that the priva-

tization of Terminal 1 be done as soon as possible due to the need (for) transparent and competitive procedures to undertake the process through a public bidding," Dee said.

"PCCI also recommended for PPA to continue operating Terminal Two, while undertaking a thorough review and benchmarking on the need to modernize its operation for further privatization efforts," he added

Dee said port users called on PPA to allow the nearby Harbour Centre and the South Harbor to operate in compension with Terminals 1 and 2.

"By competition, we mean allowing the same kind of services to each of the competing terminals and ports (such as those for bulk break and containenzed cargo, and passenger traffic)," he said.

iBank income up 132%

INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE The expansion was fueled by the hit P403 9 million, up 131.5 percent from year-ago's P174.5 mil-

"We had a robust first quarter is trading profits, net interest income and fees registered healthy growth. We have seen a very steady improvement in income in the last few years as the bank expands its business," Tony Moncupa, (Bank CFO said.

billion or 19.5 percent higher than percent to 100 per March 2005 level of P51.3 billion. shares at P42.50 per share.

Bank said its first quarter income 30.1-percent increase in its loan portfolio to P27 0 billion even as the BSP reported that the industry had a 0.5 percent year-on-year decline in loans to 1 536 trialion.

"We believe that now is the time to expand credit exposure," Betty Romulo, iBank executive vice president and head of corporate baniong said

Bank recently said its shareholders have agreed to accept Total resources werk up to P61 3 Union Bank's offer to purchase 67

FPHC net soars by 501%

FIRST PHILIPPINE HOLDINGS 67 percent from 88.4 percent Corp. of the Lopez family posted a 501 percent increase in its consolidated net income in the first quarter to P3.7 billion from P622 miltion in the same period last year, a report filed with the Philippine stock exchange showed.

This was mainly due to a P2.7billion gain from the maiden offering of power producer First

Generation Corp. Last February, First Gen raised P8.5 billion or \$162 multon from the sale of shares in the stock market. This resulted in the reduction of FPHC's interest in First Gen to

FPHC said the sale of the shares of California-based semiconductor and software supplier SiRF Technology Holdings Inc. (SiRF) last March, which fetched P199 million, also propped up profit figures.

A stronger peso also heiped boost year-to-date foreign exchange gain to P552 million

Without the one-time gains, consolidated net income would still be up 24 percent in the first quarter to P308 million

In the meantime, First Gen posted a net income of \$27 million, up 21 percent.

Finance mag cites SMIC

SM INVESTMENTS CORE AND two of its subsidiaries were voted as nance. Both firms were also inamong the Philippines' Top Ten Best Managed Companies in Finance Asia Magazine's May 2006 issue.

Investors polled by Finance Asia ranked SMIC as among the Best Managed Companies in the country, together with mall subsidiary SM Prime Holdings Inc. and banking unit Banco de Oro Universal Bank.

SMIC and BDO also made it in the list of Philippine companies

with the best corporate govercluded in the list of companies

with the best investor relations. SMIC is spending as much as P15 billion this year for the SM Group projects including new shopping malls and retail stores Real estate and tourism projects are also in the works, including the development of the 5,700hectare Hamilo Coast in Nasugbu, Batangas into a world-class : 1

ing the company's 3G service, 150 base stations and hopes to which allows users to make video calls through their handsets, as well as to download and watch video clips, and browse the Inter-

to the company's estimate. On the other hand, Globe has tives

resort complex.

Smart seeks ...

net at broadband speed.

Smart representatives will present its case for a tax incentive package before BOI officials next week in the hope of obtaining similar incentives that were awarded to Globe.

planned to set up as many as 2,000 base stations to make 3G services accessible nationwide. At present, Smart has 800 base stations-a number which will rise to 1,200 by year's end according

From page B1

raise this number to 1,000 under the expansion plan to make 3G services accessible nationwide. It has committed to put up at least 2,500 3G base stations over the next five years as one of the conditions for its 3G license from the National Telecommunications Commission.

Globe was granted pioneer stathis based on the large amount it invested in the new technology, ac-According to Chua, Smart cording to the BOL Under this new registration, Globe was classified as a new operator of infrastructure

and telecommunications facilities. The company was qualified for a six-year tax holiday, duty-free importation of capital goods and other fiscal and non-fiscal incen-



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Delighting You Always

BUSINESS

BIR April collection rises 13% to P71.3B

Agency's highest single-month tax take but still P7.7 billion short of target

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVenue yesterday said its tax collection m April reached P71.3 billion, the highest single-month collection recorded by the agency.

The amount was 13 percent higher than the P63 billion collected in the same month last year but was P7.7 billion short of the BIR's April target of P79 billion, which the government said was necessary to meet its fiscal

rargets for 2006. The BIR accounts for more than 60 percent of the national government's revenue collection. This alarmed certain officials who feared that the shortfall might jeopardize the government's goal of reducing the budget deficit to P125 billion this year from last year's P146.8 billion.

The government had high hopes of meeting its targets with the implementation of the Reformed Value Added Tax law, which raised the VAT rate from 10 to 12 percent and the corporate income tax rate from 32 to

35 percent. Albay Rep. Joey Salceda earher called for a revamp at the BIR and the ouster of its head, Revenue Commis-

sioner Jose Mario Bunag, whom be Salceda said there was no reason for the BIR to fall short of its target given the increase in the tax rates combined with growth in corporate earnings during the taxable period covered.

But the BIR said the criticisms were unfair considering that the agency's collection year-on-year had been improving. The BIR earlier said the target assigned to it by the national government might be too high.

"Instead of getting a pat on our backs for doing our best, we get scorned, and our commissioner is being taunted by him (Salceda) to quit," the BIR said.

The BIR earlier said that despute the increase in tax rates, its collection for April was partly affected by the increase in the creditable withholding tax claimed by corporate taxpayers.

The Philippine government is hardpressed to meet its budget deficit target for the year, as it seeks improvement in its credit standing as assessed by international credit rating agencies. Fiscal authorities are banking on the expected higher revenue collection to secure more favorable rating from credit rating agencies.

The Department of Finance earlier blamed for the shortfall in collection. said Moody's Investors Service had expressed willingness to improve its credit outlook on the Philippines from "negative" to "stable" if the government would be able to collect the expected revenues from the tax mea-

In the meantime, a Malacañang order lowering tariffs on imported oil is expected to adversely affect the Bureau of Custom's collection perfor-

Customs Acting Commissioner Napoleon Morales said that with the cut in the oil tariff from the 3 percent to 2 percent, the BOC would lose P1.727 billion in duty collection. If the tariff would be slashed to 1 percent, the revenue loss would amount to P3.465 billion. And if the tariff would be brought down to zero, the BOC would lose PS.182 billion in potennal duty collection.

The BOC is tasked to collect P197 billion for 2006, while the BIR is required to bring in P675 billion.



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FTA WITH EUROPE NEXT Asean, S. Korea OK trade deal

ciation of Southeast Asian Nations yesterday signed a trade pact with South Korea and agreed with the European Union to work harder toward forging a similar arrangement

The signing highlighted the Third Asean Economic Ministers-Republic of Korea Consultations held in Makati City, which coincided with the 12th AEM Retreat.

Soulivong Daravong, trade minister of Laos and co-chair of the Asean-Korea meet, said in a briefing that Asean members, except Thailand, signed a Trade in Goods Agreement with South Korea, which paves the way for the Asean-Korea Free Trade Area.

Daravong said the TIG was signed under the Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation adopted in a meeting in Cambodia last April.

"What makes this more significant is that this is the first such agreement that the Asean signed with a member of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and De-

NINE MEMBERS OF THE ASSO- South Korea's trade minister, said.

The OECD groups affluent countries that help governments worldwide to prepare their nations face the challenges of a globalized economy.

Asean Secretary General Ong Keng Yong said Thailand was unable to sign the agreement yesterday but would do so as soon as it was able to sertle "some domestic procedures."

Also, Ong said progress was made on a possible similar pact with the European Union following the 7th Asean-EU Consultations.

in a statement, the Asean and the EU said there was "still scope and much potential for both regions to pursue a more ambitious goal for closer economic integration."

Coming out of the meeting room, EU Trade Commissioner Pe ter Benjamin Mandelson said the ministers welcomed the Asean-EU vision report, which called on the two regions to take their economic partnership to "a higher level."

This refers to the establishment of a World Trade Organizationconsistent Free Trade Area and expansion of economic cooperation.

velopment," Kim Hyun-Chong, Coco oil exports up 27%

By Christine A. Gaylican

PHILIPPINE COCONUT OIL EXports rose 27 percent in the first quarter of the year to 449,304 metric tons from last year's 354,122 metric tons, the Philippine Coconut Authority yesterday said

The increased export volume translated to 7-percent unprovement in earnings to \$191 million in the first three months of the year from year-ago's \$178 milhon, PCA Deputy Administrator for marketing Arturo Liquete Jr. said in a briefing.

A supply glut in the world market during the period pulled down the international price of coconut by 14 percent to \$514.37 per metric ton from \$603 per

metric ton in the same period last

He said prices might improve

year, Liquete said.

the second semester as demand was expected to increase. Traders said the market was

tending to go softer early in the week due to an expected high level of shipments this month and a softer outlook for the soy complex futures at the Chicago Board of Trade.

Softer indications in the coconut oil market led some buyers "to test the market by contracting smaller quantities," one trader said

Traders quoted excount oil for May/June shipment at \$580 a metric ton, CIF, Rotterdam, while June/July was quoted at \$585/ton. These prices were lower by \$5/ton from prices offered a week ago.

Japan firm ...

operations in Autora province."

The Japanese company, based in Chiba, Japan, wants to venture into coconut planting and coconut oil production to bring down the cost of coconut methyl esther, which now costs P120 a itter or more expensive than petroleum-based fuels.

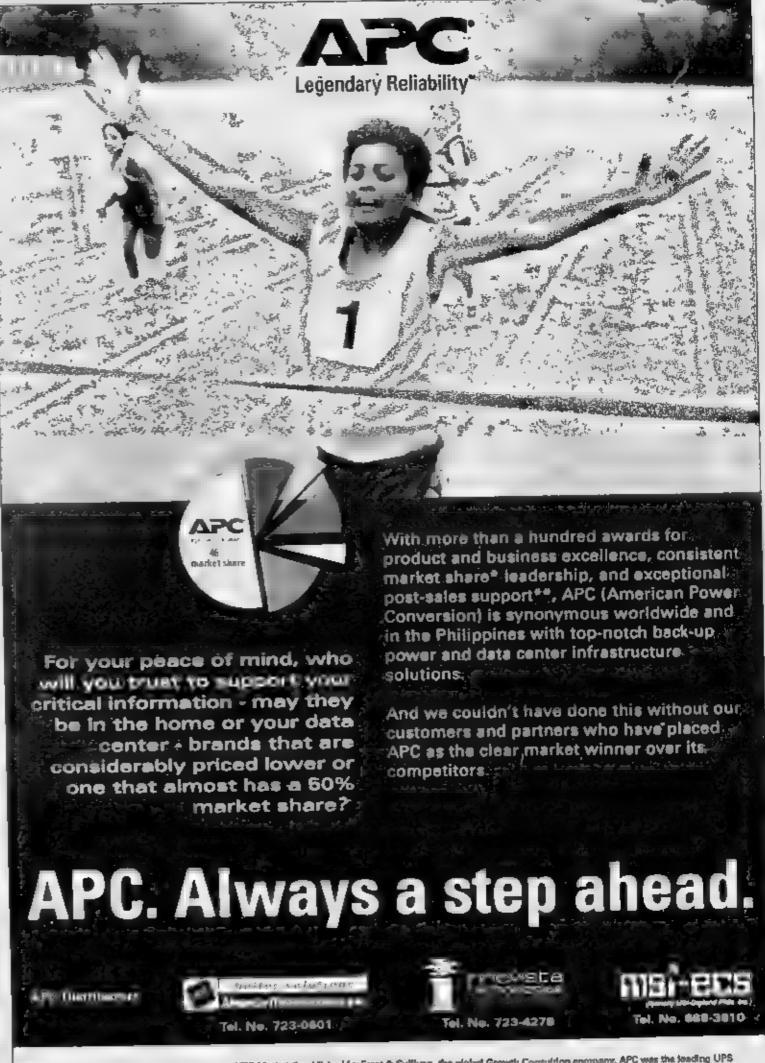
"Toyo Engineering would want to bring down the cost and is willing to venture into (large-scare) production," explained PCA Deputy Administrator Carlos Carpio.

Carpio said the agency would assist the company in looking for arable lands in flocos, Pangasinan and as far as Cagayan Valley to fill up its required area of 600,000 hectares.

"This project is for the medium term as it takes three years for a coconut seedling to actually produce coconut oil," noted Garm.

According to Toyo Engineering's corporate profile posted on its website (www.toyo-eng.co.jp) the company's operations cover hydrocarbon fields such as general chemicals, petrochemicals, oil refining, natural gas, and oil and gas development; non-hydrocarbon fields such as nuclear energy and power generation; industrial plant fields such as pharmaceutical, fine chemical, and food and beverage, and e-solution fields such as management and business consultation based on information Technology (II') and system design and construction.

For more than 40 years since its founding in 1961, Toyo Engineering has handled more than 1,400 projects globally, mainly in the plant engneering field. The company earned a consolidated net income of 3,3 billion yen in fiscal year 2005.



"According to the study entitled "Philippines UPS Meriuts" published by Front & Sullivan, the global Growth Consulting company, APC was the leading UPS supplier in the lase then 1 kVA range in 2005.

*The APC On-Sites Stock Sweep Policy: Fees delivery and pull-out of defective equipment. Stock-sweep with corresponding equipment model, Available on all BackUPS, SmartUPS and Symmetre models. Nationwide coverage. Equipment should be under rearranty. To avail of the service, contact APC's tell free number at 1-800-1661-0302 or 915-6467 (press 2)

Hyundai's Chung charged with embezzlement

SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA-PROsecutors indicted Hyundal Motor Co. chairman Chung Mong koo in an embezzlement and slush fund scandal gripping South Korea's largest automaker.

Chung, 68, who has been in custody since his April 28 arrest, was charged with embezzlement and breach of trust, said Kang Chanwoo, spokespeson for the Supreme Prosecutors' Office, without disclosing specific amounts of money involved in those charges.

But the official said the tycoon created 103.4 bill on won Head of South Korea automaker linked to slush fund scandal (\$109.5 million, 85.4 million eu- legedly incurring about 300 billion plan to indict the junior Chung ros) in slush fund with the embezz.ed money and that prosecutors were looking into how that

secret money was spent. hearing would be heid

At the time of seeking an arrest warrant for Chung, prosecutors said he was suspected of embezzang about 100 bilbon won (\$106) million, 85 million euros) in company money to create the slush fund and of breach of trust for al-

won (\$320 million; 255 million euros) in damages to the company.

Hyundai offered no official comment on the indictment, but He didn't say when the first a company official who refused to be named said the automaker hoped Chang would return to management soon.

Chung's son, Bui-son, president of Kia Motors Corp., a Hyundai affiliate, has also been investigated,

but wasn't indicted Tuesday. Media reports said prosecutors

Hyundai is suspected of using the slush fund, via at least two lobbyists, to seek favors from the

The lobbyists have been arrested on charges of receiving money from Hyumdai in exchange for promises to help it win construction approvals and permits, and other business favors.

It is unclear whether the lobbyists bribed government officials.

The scandal comes as Hyundai and Kia Motors are aggressively expanding operations to achieve their goal of becoming the world's sixth-largest automaker by 2010.

In 2004, the latest year for which statistics are available, Hyundai and Kia ranked seventh in the world in production at 3.169 million vehicles, according to wardsauto.com.

Hyundai, maker of the Sonata midsize sedan and the luxury Equus, has factories in the United

States, China, Turkey and India and plans one in the Czech Republic.

Kia is building a second plant m China and expects its first Buropean factory to start up in Slo-

vakia at the end of the year. It announced last month it would build its first US factory in West Point, Georgia, scheduled to go on line in 2009

Earlier this month, Hyundai reported a 37 5-percent drop in its' first-quarter net profit from a year ago to 318.8 billion won (\$341 million, 270 million euros). AP



Japan's consumers most upbeat in 16 yrs

their most confident in 16 years, thanks to improving employment and wage conditions, a government survey showed Thesday.

The index of confidence among households with at least two people rose to 50 in April, up 2.1 points from March and the strongest since June 1990 when it reached 50.3, the Cabiner Office said in a monthly report.

A reading above 50 indicates that optimists outmumber pessimists.

The index is based on replies to a survey asking about four aspects of consumer sentiment -perception of general economic wellbeing, meome growth, employment condi-

TOKYO-JAPANESE CONSUMERS ARE AT tions and willingness to purchase durable goods.

Respondents were asked if there have been improvement in these areas compared with three months earlier.

The sub-index for general economic wellbeing rose to 47 from 45.1 in March, while the income growth sub-index increased to 46.2

The employment conditions sub-index improved to 55.2 from 52.9 and the sub-index for willingness to buy durable goods edged up

The survey polied 5,040 households across the country on April 15

Confidence is growing that As.a's. largest economy is finally on a solid recov-; ery path after a long slump, with the unemployment rate at a seven-year low of

Consumer spending underpins 55 percentof the economy and its expans on has played a key role in pulling Japan out of the econom-

Despite the apparently upbeat mood of consumers, however, Japan's average monthly household spending fell 2.1 percent in March from a year earlier, the third straight

monthly decline, the government said ast

Telekom Malaysia denies deal with Sun Cellular

KUALA LUMPUR—MALAYSIA'S largest telecommunications company Telekom Malaysia demed yesterday a report it was in talks to acquire a stake in Philippine mobile operator Sun Cellular

"We are aware that there is an official process to dispose a minority stake in Sun Cellular," said Telekom Malaysia group chief executive Abdul Wahid Omar

"However, there is no active discussion on our part with Sun Cellular," he told reporters.

The Edge financial weekly re-

Sun Cellular, owned by the Philippine listed Digital Telecommunications Inc. is wooing two Malaysian companies including Telekom Malaysia in its search for a strategic partner here.

Although dismissing the report, Abdul Wahid said Telekom would be interested in venturing into the Philippine mobile phone

Sun Cellar of the Gokongwei group of companies is currently the third biggest player in the

ported over the weekend that Philippines' highly competitive a stake in Saudi Telecom Let's mobile telecommunications in-

> A deal with a foreign player would improve its chances of competing head to head with current leaders Smart Telecommi, nications Co. and Globe Telecom Inc.

Separately, Abdul Wahid said Telekom Malaysia could consider a stake in Saudi Telecom if the companies won a joint bid for Egypt's third mobile service li-

"We have an option to acquire

see whether the company can with the bid ... let the I cense be won. first and then we could consider a stake," he said

Telekom, through its sabsid ary TM International, has signed a memorandum of under standing with Saudi Telecom to bid for the Egyptian license

Saudi Telecom is the largest mobile operator in the Middle East and North Africa based on revenues, which in 2005 stood at, \$8.8 b..hon



A THAI vendor walks past an international brand advertisement in central Bangkok. According to researchers, Thai consumer confidence remained at a four-year low in April, mainly on concerns over the effects of high oil prices on the overall economy.



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Physic Daily & California of the Tanaharana



"Mary, for You...*

JUSTINE LOUISE V. BENGZON

Returned to the home of our Loving Father on May 15, 2006 at the age of 13.

Her beloved parents Mikey & Chet; sister Celine; brother Mio; grandparents Alran & Nini Bengzon and Marcelino & Epeng Vergel de Dios; uncles, aunts, cousins, other relatives and friends give thanks to the Lord for the blessing of her life.

She lies in state at the Christ the King Mortuary Chapels, Greenmeadows, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, May 20, 2006 after the 10:00 a.m. Mass.



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OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:

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Sa Pag Ala-ala ng Ika-1 Anibersaryo ng Pag-Yao

MELCHOR MARTIN DULDULAO

Na Namayapa noong ika-17 ng Mayo 2005

Ang kanyang na-ulilang may bahay, anak, mga apa, mga kapatid at iba pang mga kamag-anakan sampu ng mg malulapit na kaibigan ay nag alay ng pang-umagang Banal na Miso

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Sa mga naki-isa sa pagdadalamhati, lubas na nagpapasulamat ang kanyung pawitya mga na-ulila. Isang maliit na pagtitipon su pag-gunita ng kanyang pag yao ang gagana sa Virgen Muria de Guia Chapel- Franciscan Servites, Multinational Ave Multinational Village, Parañaque City sa Miyerkoles - Bo-17 ng Mayo 2006 sa ganap 7 30 ng gabi.

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Cagayan de Oro City

NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION In compliance with Section 5 of FLA. No. 9048, a

City Civil Registral TPDJ--50rg 18 & 17, 20hij

Republic of the Philippines Local Civil Registry Office Province of Misemis Oriental

ice is hereby served to the public that DICINITA G. GUDEN has lifed with this Office a pelition for change of linst name from DELIA to DIONITA in the Caristicate of Live Birth of DELIA A. GAMBOA who was born on December 16, 1956 at PURA, TARLAC and whose par-ents are ALFREDO GAMBOA and SUSANA AGANON Any person adversely effected by said petrion may his written opposition within this office not later than May 19, 2006.

NORMA S. DIPUTADO

DENTISTRY ACADEMY HOLDS MEET

The Academy of Dentistry International, Philippines Section, (ADI) will hold its First Quarterly Meeting for 2006 on Wednesday, May 17 at the Executive lounge of United Laboratories, Inc in Mandaluyong City. The program will have two parts. The first part will be devoted to the business meeting which will address the following agenda: finalization of triteria for the Recognition Award, outreach projects, fund-raising drives to help finance ADI activities, progress reports by key officers and various committee chairpersons. The second part will feature two interesting presentations by academician (active member) Dr. Isabel Campos-Bustos and clinician (guest lecturer) Dr. Alfonso T. Lagaya, M.D., MDM, who will talk on "New Dimensions in Denstistry: Accupuncture and Accupressure." According to Dr. Antonio A. Baldemor, ADI President and Dean Eliza G. Puzon, lucky members will have a chance to win a 3-day/2-night all-expense paid trip to Hongkong/Disneyland as Recognition Prize.

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- comprehension skills Excellent English communication
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NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that The Babes Pig Producers, Inc. is applying for registration with the Board of Investments (BOI) as Domestic Producer of Piglets on a Non-Ploneer Status with capacity of 5,000 Piglets Per Year and with project/plant site located at Purok 3, Suntan Street, Panalipen, Catmon, Cebu

Any person with valid objection/s on the abovementioned project may file his/her objection # writing, under oath, with the BOI within three (3) days from the date of this publication.

(Sgd.) RUDY B. CAÑA Project Evaluation and Registration Department



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"Into Your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit."

ROSARIO "CHERRY" A. CASAL joined her creator on May 14, 2006

at the age of 66

"My heartfelt thanks to friends, family and most of all to God's precious gifts, my children, Mariear, MayAnn & Ron, Michael & Grace, Mark Danny & Camille, and Mia: grandchildren: Angelica, Cayla, Gabby and Hipolita."

Her remains lie in state at the White Plains Chapel, Nathan St., White Plains Subdivision, Quezon City

Interment mass will be on May 18, Thursday at White Plains Chapel, 9 A.M.

She will be laid to rest at Christ the King Crypt, Greenmeadows.

Psalm 91:1-2

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say to the Lord, "He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust."

In lieu of flowers, we would appreciate love offerings for the Casal charity projects.



Our beloved MAMA

CONCORDIA "Cording" CEÑA ESPINOZA

Served her community as a homemaker, public school teacher, barangay leader, city councilor, civic leader

peacefully joined her CREATOR and our PAPA, the late H.A.P ESPINOZA on May 13, 2006, at the Nueva Ecija Doctors Hospital, Cabanatuan City at the age of 77

Fondly called Mamang / Mama Cords/ Ate Cords by nieces, nephews, grandchildren, relatives and friends whom she loved dearly in her lifetime.

Her sisters Naty, Lina, Alma; brothers Gaudencio & Constanciot; sisters-in-law Albina, Mely, Lily & Alicia, brothers-in-law Implongt, Lucingt, Manolot, Tito & Junt request the pious readers to pray for eternal repose of her soul.

We, her children, grandchildren & great grandchild are very thankful to the Lord for giving us the chance to show our devotion to her

Nennette & Monching Bacani Monchito, Kris & Sasa

Joji & Boy Reyes Olga & Verus; Jaja; Kit, Christine & Maxim;

Roots & Sitsov Francisco

Jun & Aying Navarro

Dominic & Cezar

A.ssa & Carlo

Daisy & Ricky Enriquez

Enka & Enck

Jojo & Daisy Manuel

Joma, Monica & Timi

Raymund & Mod Blase Her remains lie in state at the Stp. Niño Chapel, Kapt. Pepe Subd.,

Cabanatuan City and will be cremated after the 8:00 AM Mass on Saturday, May 20, 2006.

CLASSIFIEDS



1598 M. H. del Pilar comer Dr. J. Quintos Streets, Maiate, Manilla Tel. Nos. 522-0000; 526-0100 connecting all departments INVITATION TO APPLY

The Land Bank of the Philippines invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the projects as stated below:

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hom / Description		poroved Budget	Source of Funds	Non-Refundable Fee	
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		16,000,000.00	LBP Funds	2,000.00	

Bidding is on June 14, 2006 at 1:00 PM and Bid Documents may be obtained from the General Services Department, 25th Floor, LANDBANK Plaza, M. H. del Pilar corner Dr. Quintos Streets Matate, Manifa, upon payment of the required non-refundable fee.

Interested suppliers are requested to attend the Pre-Bid Conference scheduled on June 1, 2006 at the abovementioned address.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

LANDBANK reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to armul the bidding process, and to reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder(s).

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 17, 2006

Gov't to borrow P104.5B in Q3

BTr to issue Treasury bills, bonds

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU OF THE TREASURY P77 9 billion offered in the same said the government would bor- period last year. row P104.5 billion from the domestic market in the third quarter auctioned off in the third quarter this year, 21.2 percent less than would mature in seven, 10, 20, the P132.6 billion borrowed dur- and 25 years. ing the same period last year.

ly largely through the regular auc- deficit figure to the estimated intions of Treasury bills and bonds.

yesterday that the government rate income tax rate need not borrow as much money due to the narrowing budget gap.

PI46.8 billion last year and is es-rate from 32 to 35 percent. timated to be cut to P125 bidion

rowing requirement of the gov- seen as the Bureau of Internal ernment will be less, being consistent with the improving fiscal revenue collection agency, has deficit," Cruz told reporters.

The BTr said in a report that of ceeds of the tax measures. the P104.5 billion scheduled borrowing for the third quarter, P46 billion will come from the issuance of Treasury bills, or gov- though the revenue agency ernment securities with tenors of stressed that its collection perforone year and less.

auction off P58.5 billion worth of Treasury bonds, or government securines with medium- to long-

T-bonds to be offered in the third quarter is lower than the

The BTr said the T-bonds to be

The BTr attributed the expect-The government borrows local- ed improvement in its budget crease in revenue collection, part-National Treasurer Omar Cruz by due to the increase in the valtold reporters in a press briefing ue-added tax rate and the corpo-

The reformed VAT law raised from the domestic market this year the VAT rate from 10 to 12 percent starting February and has in-The budget deficit stood at creased the corporate income tax

The actual impact of the higher tax rate for VAT and corporate in-It is only natural that the bor- come tax, however, remains to be Revenue, the government's main ver to realize the expected pro-

The BIR was reported to have posted a revenue collection shortfall of about P7 billion in April, almance was much better than The government would also what it recorded during the same month of last year

The BIR was tasked to collect P79 billion in April alone, and P675 billion for the entire year.

Peso continues fall, down to 52.37 vs \$

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PESO YESTERDAY PALTERED to a fresh four-month low of \$2.37 against the US dollar on rising corrock-bottom domestic interest trend. rates, currency dealers said.

other 22 centavos at the Philippine course, the other thing is that in-Dealing System versus the previ-terest rates based on Treasury bull ous day's 52.15 to the US dollar.

it was the currency's weakest finish since closing at 52.385:\$1 on Jan. 27 this year.

The peso opened at the intraday high of 52.25 and closed near the intra-day low of 52.42 to the issues abroad was narrowing US dollar, while volume turnout

amounted to \$572.5 million. This is the technical correction that we've been waiting for since we came from the 56 \$1 level in September-October last year. Since then, the market has been moving only one way, up, (favoring the peso) and is thus due for a rechnical rebound," said Jose Emmanuel Hilado, treasurer at BDO Private Bank and president of foreign exchange associa-

tion ACI Philippines. Hilado said this was nothing to percent.

worry about since the peso has gained a hefty 6 over the last few months and a technical bounce favoring the US dollar was healthy

He expected the market to next porate demand ahead of the import test the 52,90-53:\$1 levels before season as well as concerns over the currency resumes its bullish

"Nothing has changed as far as After shedding 44 centavos on the country's credit fundamentals Monday, the local currency lost an- are concerned," Hilado said. "Of

He agreed that peso-denominated government securities were losing their appeal to offshore investors because the difference in the yield compared to

"You have a situation where there's a possibility of a fresh (interest) rate hike in the US and Philippine rates are at the level not good for the local currency," Hilado said.

Hilado said the average yield of 91-day Treasury bills of about S percent, for instance, reduced further by tax, was not competitive versus the dollar inter-bank offered rate of 5 percent and the three-month LIBOR (London Interbank Offered Rate) of 5.17

Electric cooperatives readied for spot mart

By Abegail L. Ho

IN PREPARATION FOR THE START OF COMmercial operations of the wholesale electricity spot market in June, market operator Philippine Electricity Market Corp. (PEMC) is conducting capacity-building sessions with 71 electric cooperatives in Luzon and Visayas.

PEMC participant development officer Cerise Manuel said these sessions would prepare the cooperatives to become participants of Westra.

"The training sessions are designed to provide professional skills, develop and instill willingness rather than compulsion in participation, and tmprove and accelerate market understanding and preparedness," she said in a statement yesterday.

For his part, PEMC president Lasse Holopainen said Wesm saw the electric cooperatives as integral parts of the electricity bourse as "they are not only the main conduits of power to consumers in the countryside, but are also among the primary instruments of change in their communities."

Under the Wesm, consumers such as the electric cooperatives, distribution utilities such as the Manda Electric Co., and other targe-scale power buyers will all have equal opportunities to purchase power at the best possible price via the electricity bourse.

Electricity will be traded via the Internet on an hourly basis. Much like trading in the stock market, electricity prices are not fixed. These will fluctuate depending on the supply, demand and even the time of trading.



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By Charles E. Buban

AST YEAR, TOYOTA MOTOR Philippines started what it dubbed the Innova Road Trek, an adventure packed ride wherein teams representing various motoring media outfits go to several destinations of a particular region (last year was Panay Island) and try to earn points from the various activities prepared in each of these stopovers

As Ariel de Jesus, TMP supervisor for PR and sales promotion, reminded, this event is not a road race. Instead, the Road Trek's fun challenges are designed to test the wits and physical prowess of each team while at the same time allow each member to experience the performance of the Toyota Innova through various road conditions

This year's edition of Road Trek is especially significant not only because the event brought the participants to two of Mindanao's more prosperous and delightful cities-Cagayan de Oro and Davao-but also this is the first time the Inquirer participated (after failing to field a team last year)

Like last year, the Road Trek's Itinerary and challenges remained a surprise. However, the 10 participating teams (Team Inquires is made up of columnist Andre Palma, digital prepress specialist Genie Lagman, IT section head Noti Navarro and this writer) got an idea of what the first challenge would be. Upon arrival at the Cagayan de Oro airport, we headed straight to our assigned linnova where huge inflarable rafts are strapped on top.

Conquer a raging river

Indeed, the first day of the Road Trek not only made us conquer a raging river but also faced our fears (among the challenges included were jumping off a three-meter-high rock rising in the muddle of the river and a time tria. wherein the team must paddle against the current, afterward jump off the raft, flip it, then turn it over again and then hop back into

After this grueling task where we paddled all day (covering over 12 km and encountering 14 rapids) under the sun's scorching heat, we headed to another destination, which we thought is our break.

Wrong guess. Next stop was Mapawa Nature Park where each team must send a representative who must ride a zip line (like a cable car), slide courtesy of a rope-and-pulley contraption and hold a plastic of water that must be thrown at a target several meters down. Afterward, another team member must suppel 12 meters down biting a spoon filled with five cashew nuts (if you drop one, this will be subtracted to your team's overall score)

It was already dusk when we arrived at the Koresko Hotel, After freshening up, we headed to Tabing Dabing Dagat restaurant for our much-deserved dinner.

The sleep was most welcome since we needed it the following day as the teams ADVENTURE/ 82-2



THE INNOVAS: All strapped up and ready to PHOTOS BY GENIE LAGRAIN



THE INQUIRER team paddling after conquering the raging river and each member's fears.

MOOM







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VIOTORING

Taking the Ranger north

THE PORD RANGER PICKUP HAD a very long day shead of it. As it sat there, in one of the front parking slots of the Balintawak dealership, little did it know of the drive that it would have to put in, much less anything of its final destination for the day. The road ahead had the slopes of the Banawe rice terraces, in Ifugao Province, as its final stop, easily 300 kilometers away from where the truck was

It struck me of just how visually varied the vista of the green, stepped slopes of one of the wonders of the world would be from the hazy congestion building before my eyes of the northbound lane of Edsa. The roads ahead would mostly be tedious two-lane provincial highways, but there were quite a few notable sections marked in our road book. We would have to pay our way-dog fighting with tricycles, hand tractors, buses and trucks-to be able to play in some of the best driving roads in Northern Luzon.

Speed traps

The first task at hand would be traveling the entire length of the North Luzon Expressway, in a loose convoy with faster Fords. It may sound audicrous but there was a constant worry of the toll-road's peculiar speed traps. Yes, ladies and gentlemen, even if the current Ranger turbo diesel a generation back in technology from the common rail, direct injection (CRDI) engines now problerating among the competition, it is able to break the mandated speed limit on the NLEX with confidence. Conviction is another matter altogether.

winded, but helped along by two

MY DRIFT

important factors: the good ratios of the 2nd and 3rd gears, the length of the 4th cog, plus the useful turque of the engine. The 2.5-liter, 12-valve single cam turbo develops a decesa, but dated 120 bhp, while pull is hefty at 280 Nm of twist. The XLT unit's 5-speed mamial is also a saving grace for the veteran platform as the automatic transmissions of the competition uniformly concede ability for the sake of constort and ease of use.

Ride comfort

Andre Palma

The ride comfort of a pickup is_ never something that one looks forward to on long, drawn-out drives and the Ranger is not an exception. The plotted 12-hour drive, plus stops would surely knock a little wind from driver and passengers. As excited as one can about their destination, one can get quickly deflated when you start to wonder why you left your kidney belt at home. The drive would be no walk in the park; it would be work and hard labor, at that.

Work began, in earnest, as our vehicle began to ascend Daltim Pass, on the border between Nueva Ecija and Nueva Viscaya. The twisty cement highway, with its notorious truck and bus traffic, would be a test of the truck's basic balance and vehicular fundamentals. The key to Acceleration is relatively short any good driving experience is panence and flow, but it would not be

embellished to say that momentum is the Ranger's friend—actually its best friend in the conditions of Dal-

Tirue highlight of the drive

Also, as harsh as this genre of vehicle gets, it seems fortunate that this Ford is actually also a rather forgiving platform when one makes mistakes. The occasional, mistaken but necessary dab on the brake pedal, for mid-turn correction, is not something that will elicit too much tension. Just don't try to stand on the middle pedal while turned, as the Ranger is not that sympathetic. The descent down Dahon seemed to confirm the stipulation of such a long drive, but the banked Banawe uphill and downhill run was the true highlight of the drive.

The key to the tackling the tight, twisty sections headed for the rice terraces is the Ranger XLT's Limited Slip Differential. Twice the truck wanted to lose traction and get especially sideways from a dangerous recipe of speed, gravel, camber and elevation change. While more essential and suited for rough road excursions, because of its ability to mechanically manage power to the wheels with traction, mistakes are made less embarrassing, less fussed by the Ranger's trick diff.

Upon dearing one of the final crests, just about sunset, we caught a glimpse of the first few rice terraces. I'll have to admit I was rather disappointed, as huts and houses now share the same real esrate-and therefore the same postcard views—of what is probably the 8th Wonder of the World. The saying grace was the drive, through some rather testing roads, where the Ranger showed its true worth.

Mother of all treks

IT HAPPENED TWO WEEKS

Woke-up at 2:30 in the morning, was on the road at 3 and, by 3:30, I was at the domestic airport. Did all that, not in a shy way, to catch a 5 a.m. flight to Cagayan de Oro City -- which I did.

So, what brought me to the almost at this ungodly hour, when Rustie Otica would just be crawling his way out of a bar to attempt to climb an FX on his way home to Dasmariñas, Cavite?

Well, it was Darmy "Sir John" Isla inviting. If it's Sir John doing the inviting, I raise my hands in surrender.

"How can the Lennon-McCartney due be complete without you?" Sir John would say.

I'll cry instead other than say

Ariel "SPO2" de Jesus, with the magnetic appeal, did the usuat herding of motoring journalists. Turns out he used this mother of all treks as his swan song at

I didn't feel fine when I learned Ariel was leaving Toyota. When I got wind of it, something in me revolted and, almost,

I approached Ariel and seriously thought of telling him, "You can't do that." Sue Elijah Marcial has been terribly orphaned by this Ariel

being Elijah's well-loved mensor all these years. Sir John, as well as Raymond Rodriguez, Sonny Guerrero and even Jing Abenza-not to mention Sherwin Chualim-had all

been left, for now, groping in the

FULL Tank Al Mendoza

vawrung void created by Ariel's highly improbable "she's leaving

Ariel has been basically known as the Toyota spark plug all these years, dating back to the glorious days of the one and only Vince Socco, a super TMP marketing/PR guru before becoming a piliar of Toyota Motors Asia-Pacific based in Singapore for five years or so now.

Anel will join-if he hasn't yet-Subaru as marketing/PR chief, bringing into this tiny vehicle company an arsenal of 13 highpowered years spent entirely as Toyota's frunt man for media af-

Anel, 34, said he was quitting Toyota because "I have reached the crossroad of my life. Working at Toyota was simply phenomenal, amazing. Frankly, I have chosen the unrested path. But I feel the need for change."

As his last performance "of my life at Toyota," Ariel assembled 45 or so motoring journalists from Manila and Mindanao—the biggest ever-for a four-day road trek with Innova in Cagayan de Oro and

After a whistle-stop at CdO Toyota topped by a sumptuous breakfast hosted by Betty Lu, the only lady owner of a Toyota dealership in the country, the entourage took to a breathtaking whitewater raiting in dark to find someone to fill the the huge, majestically beautiful Ca-

gayan de Oro River. It was quite an experience riding through 14 mostly jolting rapids, making

Pagsanjan a mere kid stuff. Next morning, the drive to Davao City on board 10 Innovas afforded everybody a chance to savor the splendor of nearly 300 kilometers of mostly exotic zigzags cradled by exquisitely carvedby-nature mountains of Bukidnon and Davao, many of them handsomely craggy any doubter once he sees them can begin to believe again that there is, in-

But the trip to Davao, where the Toyota dealership of the mimitable Boyet Lim is tops in Southern Mindanao, wouldn't be complete if I didn't drop by my buddy Ken Angeles' place, the Yellow Pin Tuna Restaurant beside "After Dark." Over there, the adobo tail of the yellow fin tuna has no equal anywhere in the world. And that's just one in a menu that includes other exquisite dishes like the mouthwatering ubol-ubol and greaseless Bisayang chicken.

All that would add to Toyota lore, not to mention my personal account of Ariel's emotional "hel-10 goodbye" to Sir John in Davao in a one-on-one on the eve of the flight back to Manita.

Good luck, Anel-san. You have my prayers.

OUOTE ME. Extraordinary patience is what you need so that you can avoid killing a jeepney driver

Comments to menju@pldtd-

thing that I have for cars," he pon-

Yet, he could not avoid playing

"I've had numerous cars in the

past, but my all-time favorite is

the Austin Mini Cooper with a

1275 cc engine. It was my first

race car and I used it in sla.oms

and circuit races in the '60s. In

1999, I bought another Mini

Cooper, the last of the old Mini.

This savvy car restorer's prized

cars and other chosen pieces from

his treasure trove of motorsports

memorabilia were among the fea-

tured items in the auto show of

the Automobile Association

Philippines (AAP), held recently

It's in my office now."

ders with a smile

Playing favorites

MOTORSCOPE

VIEW TRAFFIC VIA SMART 3G

Joel Gallego, center, and his friend experience Smart 3G during a stopover at a gas station last Holy Week. The two male motorists see traffic video streamed real time on a 3G-capable phone. Smart is the first mobile operator in the country to offer 3G services since it started opening its network on a free trail basis to its subscribers with 3G capable handsets in key cities last Feb. 14.

New Caltex gasoline
CHEVRON PHE LIPPINES INC. RECENTLY ANNOUNCED THAT CHEVRON'S exclusive fuel-creaning-ingredient Technon is now available in all grades of .

gasoline at Caltex service stations nationwide. The specially formulated ingredient helps prevent a car's vital engine parts from build no up deposits, which can adversely affect vehicle performance, increase emissions and result in a car using more gasoline, thus. driving up the cost of running the car

"Ca.tex gasoure mixed yest the Technon cleaning ingredient is mobest "Caltex gasonine mixed with the recently interesting the recently able at protecting car sorties from the effects of performance robbing data. posits, helping misuratit delivers optimum power, aconomy, pickup and asmoother ride," said Roger J. Organ, manager for Chevron's Product Englnearing, Regulations and Technology (PERT) team for Asia Pacific, Africa

Chevron officials stressed that even one tankful of Cattex with Techron is enough to clean up deposits on the fuel injectors. They also said that ongoing use of Techron can minimize hermful combustion chamber deposits, which can lead to knocking, and results in higher emissions and loss of power during acceleration.

Volvo Tour de Force

IT'S A TOTAL SHOW OF FORCE WITH THE DYNAMIC FLEET OF VOLVOS coming to key destinations in the metro starting this weekend. The Volvo Tour de Force will kick off at the Alabang Town Center on May 19-20 where steek and stylish Volvos will be on display

Valvo Tour de Force, a series of roadshows where Volvo brings its cars closer to its market, is also one big continuing game of chance where on its final leg, a lucky Volvo roadshow goer wilt drive home his brand-new Volvo

The Tour de Force roadshows, normally at mails in Metro Manila, will also serve as venues for the qualifying legs of the Tour de Force Game. Upon signing up at any Velvo Tour de Force venue, guests will get a chance to participate in the Tour de Force qualifying race. Winners in the qualifying rounds will get a limited invite equivalent to a slot in the Your de Force Final Leg in December at the Volvo Makati Showroom,

A lot more is in store for visitors in these roadshows. Askle from choos-Ing from a variety of stylish and powerful Volvo models; guests will also be treated to an assortment of fun activities and prizes for the whole family.

Newest car accessories shop

THERE S A NEW ONE-STOP CAR ACCESSORIES SHOP IN TOWN WHERE e fantastic deal awalts sedan owners. It is called 7 Flags Auto Tints & Accessories Shop, located at Unit 12, Le Fuerza Plaza One on Pasong Tamo, San Lorenzo, Makati. For only P1,990, sedan owners can avail of Heat Bloc auto tinting with a 3-year warranty, done in an air-conditioned, all-weather, dustfree tint room.

Conveniently located near the country's leading car dealers and easily accessible to motorists. 7 Flags specializes in auto tints and HID light conversion systems. Clear films and specialty films which have state-of-the art features are also available for more discriminating car buffs. The shop offers the widest selection of tinks for its customers, with as much as 30 tints to

Also 7 Flags has a unique black room for testing car lighting systems. particularly HID (High Intensity Discharge) Humination. Aside from time and HID lamps, 7 Flags will carry vehicle security systems, Rocket Batteries from Korea with a 2-year warranty, wiper blades, car horns and other items.

The shop is open from 9:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. dally, it is owned and operated by Glacier Auto Tints & Accessories Inc. (tel. nos. 812-1678 and 894-3797).

FAST LANE FLASHBACK

Driver's passion for motorsports just really in my system, this

IT WOULD SEEM LIKE IT WAS just yesterday as Jose V "Boy" Ochoa shares his love story with cars and motorsports. This former race car driver-turned-car restoration business maverick has always been and will always be a fan of the fast lane

"I started racing in:1969 and I Was champion in my class with the first raily that I joined by, drove a Dodge Colt. It was at that time that I became a proud member of Cam Wreckers Association, along with the likes of Serge Osmeña, Alfredo Lim and Dodjie Laurel and many others.

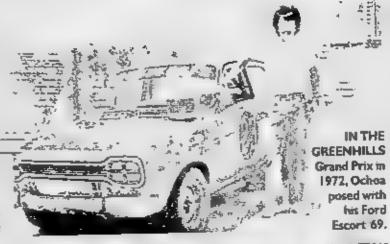
Every field in motorsports

From then on, 58-year-old Ochoa recalls getting his hands on every field there was in motorsports-drag racing, slalom, karting, and circuit racing.

Talso became a navigator in the mid 70s. There was even a time when we were the only Asians driving a Peugeot in the "Hong-Beijing Rally in 1985," he narrates.

president of the Philippine International Karting Association (Pi--ka) in the '80's. It was also around this time that he decided to stop racing to avoid any bias in his duties as Pika president.

It is this singular love for cars and motorsports that he took a derour from his mechanical engi-



INTHEIST Hong Kong-Beijing Rally m 1985.

Ochoa and his Peugeot wowed other foreign delegates as

car accessories.

they race to the finish line. Eventually, The became the neering degree at the Mapua Institute of Technology to get involved in the business of seiling

Repair, restoration

Gradually, he was led to venture into what he knew and loved best-car restoration. Up to the present, Ochoa is actively in-

volved in the repair and restora-

while he was in Davao and a

timousine that he used here in

tion of all sorts of cars. Twe restored a Ford Escort that holds much memories to me for I've used it before in races. We also have here the Pope's car, a Ford Bronco that was lent to him

at the PICC Forum, CCP Complex, Pasay City. Ocho could not conceal his enthusiam at the thought of show-

ing precious parts of his past. "It is really a pride and joy of any former motorsports enthusiast it ke me to share the mementos of our glory days in racing Remimiscing the past, we hope to inspire others to excel in the same kind of passion that we did. It is a way for them to appreciate that in order for anybody to stand out in anything he does, he must always treasure it and devote it his time," he ends.



THE INNOVA convoy speeds through the Dei Monte plantation.



TEAM INQUIRER is represented by (from left) Noli Navarro, Charles Buban, Genie Lagman and Andre Palma.

Adventure ride with Toyota Innova

From page B2-1

drove southward to Davao City, a more than 300-km drive that would take us and the Innova through winding highways and mountain passes.

However, enjoying the sights or taking short naps is out of the question as we are tasked to count all the innova bunners that are placed along the way. A correct count would earn us extra

Warmest welcome

The adventure finally ended in a Toyota dealership in Davao City where, just like the one in Cagayan de Oro, gave us their warmest welcome.

The last day of the event saw us transferring to the Pearl Parm in Samal-Island (a 40-minute ride from the Davao City pier) for rest and recreation and of course, the awards night.

de Oro emerged as champion after scoring the highest number of points, besting nine other teams composed of media men and women from Metro Manila and

Last year's champion Auto Review bagged the runner-up position. The C! Magazine/Tech & Tuner/Auto Extreme team won

Although the Inquirer team

The media team from Cagayan finished fourth, the rankings no longer mattered as all of us discovered something more important that night. Thanks to the Innova Road Trek, we not only discovered some of the hidden wonders of Mindanao (at least for us based here in Metro Manila) or faced our fears or our abuity to take risks-we also now know why the innova is a top seller and why it is on every Filipino car buyer's short list.

The Murano identity

E-mail

IN A CNN FEATURE ON CARLOS GHOSN subwoofer and 6-disc in-dash CD play. The ast Saturday night, the man who saved Nis- driver's seat is power adjustable with memory san Motor Co. from the brink of bankruptcy ry, the reasview mirror is auto-dim was shown stepping out of a black Nissan Mu-ming, aircon controls are dual

ano. I found the scene symbolic, for it was during Ghosn's awe-**ON THE** some turnaround of Nissan in Japan several years ago that the ROAD Murano was created

Now the president/CEO of both Nissan and Renault (which has a major stake in Nissan), Ghosu spends half the month in Tokyo, half in Paris. In a way, his work schedule reflects the half-Asian, half European identity of the Muof Venice that is renowned for its Aida Sevillabeautiful glass works, the Murano Mendoza successfully blends the flair of Italian design with the tuned power of one of

Ultimate

Japan's foremost sports cars, the Nissan 350Z.

can also be described as the most stylish, ultimate auxily crossover, combining the smooth ride, power and responsive handling of a sports

zone with vents in the B-pillars, the pedals are adpower. justable, door pockets flip out for easy acress and the twotiered glove box is big enough for a

laptop computer. A dashboard monitor dis plays info such as average speed. time and traveled distance and there are three power outlets and cupholders.

Summing up, the Murano is a jewel of an SUV yet reasonably priced at P2 888 milhon.



sedan (it is built on the same platform as the Altima) with the flexible cargo capacity of a wagon and the high driving position and roominess of a medium-size sport utility vehicle Although the Murano by its very name is identified with high-quality glass, it is not as fragile. True, like all crossovers its four-wheel independent suspension was designed more for laghway travel than rugged off-road terrain, but its 4x4 system and Vehicle Dynamics Controi consisting of brake LSD (limited sup differennal), ABS and EBD together with the powerassisted disc brakes on all four 18-inch wheels guarantee traction and stability when the going gets rough or slippery. The other safety features of the Murano are dual front airbags, curtain airbags, front seat active head restraints, high intensity headlights, fog lights and keyless remote entry with theft alarm. Stand out

Aside from its sleek, head-turning body sculpture, three things make the Murano stand out among its competitors in the luxury SUV segment the smooth power delivery of its Xtronic Continuously Variable Transmission (CVT), its agility despite its size and weight, and rear seat ride comfort.

CVT, instead of stufting through gears like a conventional automatic transmission (AT), operates with pulleys. It changes ranos continuously, more quickly and more smoothly than a - normal AT, always matching engine speed to stay in the power band . This results in more ef ficient acceleration and should improve fuel есопоту:

: Mileage

Overall mileage is supposed to average 8 km/Liter in combined city and highway driving, but 4 km/bter is more like it. I started out with a full tank (82 liters) and after driving 257 5 km, the tank was one fourth (20.5 liters) full. But then, the speeds at which I drove the Murano (180 kph at one point) must have affected its fue, economy

Despite its 1829 kg max curb weight, the Murano is surprisingly nimble. Mated to a six-gear CVI, its powerful, ultra-quiet 3.5 liter V6 twin cam engine, tuned to produce 245 hp/6,000 rpm, delivers acceleration and handling as swiftly, as smoothly and as responsively as a sports sedan. The 318 Nm/3,600 rpm max torque benefits throttle response. At a given road speed, you can shift from D (Drive) to S (Sport) to raise engine revs 2,500 rpm.

Legroom

There is plenty of legroom for three tail adults occupying the back seat. By pulling a strap, you can recline the backrest so that rear seat passengers can lean back, stretch their legs and enjoy the ride. The rear seats also sput 60/40 to accommodate lengthy cargo. When you pull a handy lever in the cargo area, the rear seats flop forward to increase cargo space to 81.6 cubic feet from 32.6 cubic feet

Ad seats are luxurious black leather contrasting dramatically with the brished aluminum panel and garrush in the roomy cabin Euro touches: the steering wheel-mounted audio controls, the powered glass sunroof and 225watt Bose audio system with seven speakers,

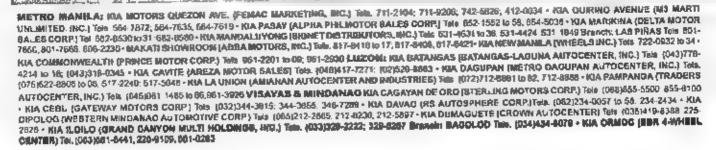


INSIDE, black leather and brushed alumınum garnish.



THE 3.5-LITER, V6 engine produces 245 hp/6000 rpm.







Motorsports Awards caps first AAP auto show

nent names in Philippine motor sports are this year's winners of the Automobile Association of the Philippines' (AAP) annua, Motorsports Awards which capped the recently concluded 1st AAP Auto Jody Coseteng (touring) Show at The Forum, PICC Complex over the weekend

The awards were a fitting climax to a week-long celebration of the AAP's 75th anniversary that saw the pillars of Philippine motorsports, both past and present, come together to celebrate and look back to the colorful history of auto sports in the country.

Awardees

The recipients of the AAP Motorsports Awards during last Sun-

SOME OF THE MOST PROMI- day's closing ceremonies of the 1st AAP Auto Show were Leo Joel Cordero (drag racing), Dante Dunges (4x4), Michelle Bumgarner (karting), Alex Reyes (rally cross), Daryli Flores (statom) and

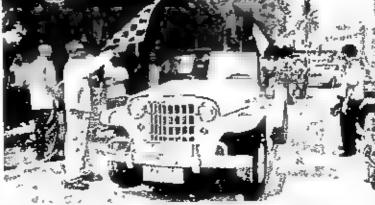
> Likewise awarded were the winners of the various motorsports competitions held during the three-day AAP Auto Show. In autocross, the category winners were Niño Sarte, best novice; Arthur Pasao, fastest rear wheel drive; Ivan Isada, fastest front wheel drive, Kumo Otaka from Japan, fastest car club entry, and Noel Rivera, fastest overall driver of the day.

In the 4x4 entegory, 4-cylinder class; first place was won by Co-

KYUNDA, PORT BONIFACIO • KYUNDA; GENERAL, BANTOB • MYUNDA; MARCOS HI-WAY • MYUNDA; BHAW BLYD.

DII-NCR Permit No. 1221 Series of 2006.

and the technical appropriate that the water to be a second to the technical technical



AAP officials flagging off participants to the vintage car parade.

coy Ramos. In second place was Maningas (1st), Hirrian Mendio-Alam Lo while Bernie Feliciano copped third place. In the 6-cylinder class, the winners were Gibo

la (2nd) and Atoy Jamilla (3rd) In the production category for diesel, first place went to Devor

Angeles, followed by Rody Consump (2nd) and Ishi Marocom and Enterprises (Bridgestone), (3rd), while in the production gas, first place went to Rissa Katigbak, followed by Jun Nocum (2nd) and MJ Mendoza (3rd)

Sponsors

The 1st AAP Auto Show was sponsored by Petron Corp., Denso, Toyota Motors Philippines, Lufthansa German Aritnes, PS Bank, Sustagen Premium, Lipovitan, Top Gear, NU 107, 105 1 Crossover and Jam 88.3.

The auto show was also supported by Hastrave..com, Inteco Group of Isuzu dealership, Ford Libis, Hyundai Asia Resources, Car Makatı (Pasig Honda Mitsubishi

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ммм.ракоового.содърј.

or visit any of our BDO or BDO On-site branches.

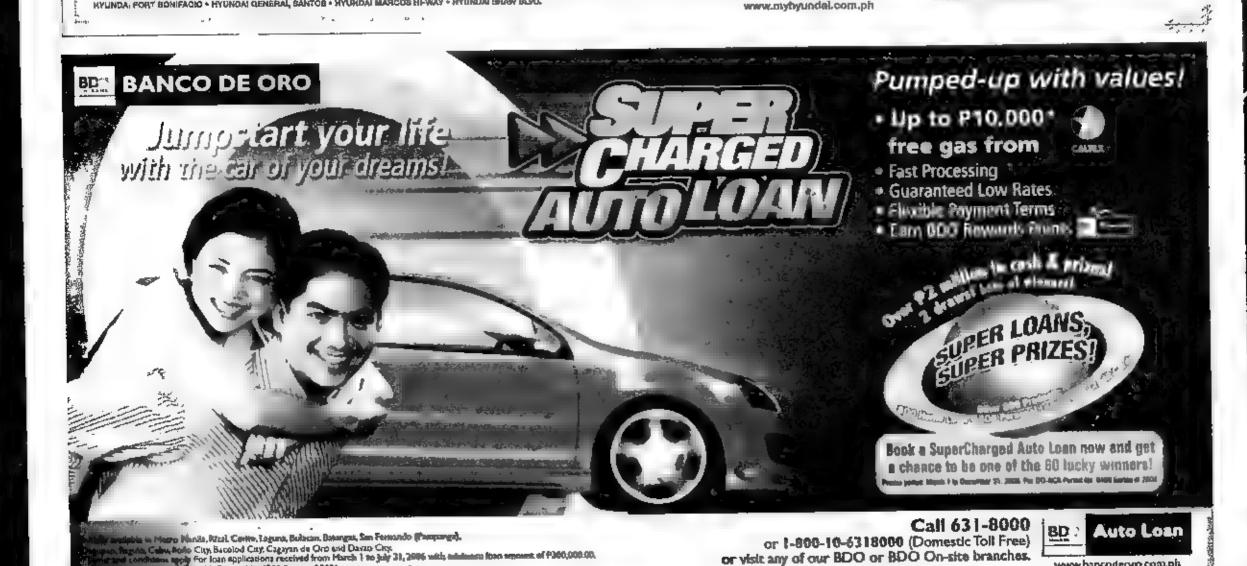
Philippines Corp., Philippine Aland Mazda Philippines.

Other highlights

Another highlight of the AAP diamond jubilee celebrations was the AAP Photo Gallery, which .ecluded famous race/rally drivets Dod, ie Laurei, Dodo Ayuyao, Baby Luna, Jovy Marcelo, Robert Aventa ado, VIP Isada, Mandy Eduque, Boy Ochoa, Paeng Noda: to and Pocholo Ramirez.

The Vintage Cars and Clubs Rally was also a successful event of the AAP jubilee. About 65 cars participated in the Metro Marua motorcade which was held, in cooperation with the Department of



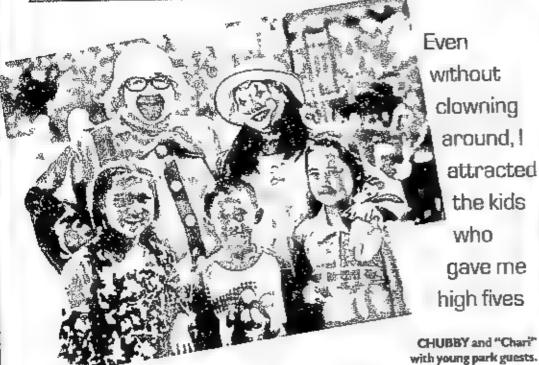


Part 2

The 2bU! Correspondents have done crazy things in the line of duty—become a gasoline boy, a supermarket bagger, an elevator operator, pose nude for artists, pretend to become a model, an actress, even a rockstar. The craziness continues this week as more correspondents try their hands at different

9 01. To be you

summer jobs. What's it like to be a clown, a hotel kitchen aide and a movie ticket seller? Find out in this issue. We also have a story from The Philippine Plaza's Chocolate Girl who managed to turn her internship into a really sweet job. Read on



Text by Vanessa Arellano Doctor 2bU! Correspondent Photos by Nine Carandang

THAT ONE SATURDAY WAS MOST

unusual, I dare say

Normally, I wake up to thoughts of "Oh, no, I have to go to work again Where's the ironing board?" But that particular day, I became Enchanted Kingdom's resident female clown,

And though my heart was racing with excitement and anticipation, it was nowhere near funny. In fact, just the thought of having to face hundreds of children and adults and making sure they like me filled me with dread

Will I be an effective clown? What makes a good clown anyway?

EK head clown Chubby, who refused to have his real name printed, said there really was nothing to it. If you love what you do, everything should fail into place, he said

Yes, including the jokes and wisecracks I have a ways considered myself funny, but most of my jokes are in no way near whole-

some. Actually, most of the things I say that people laugh at are sarenstic and crude. They are not "clown jokes." I started to imagine making a kid cry or drawing blank stares. While some people are terrified at the sight of clowns, there I was

fearing becoming one. "Relax, they won't know who you are," I kept telling myself during the briefing.

Chubby was very accommodating, making sure I did not throw up in my mouth every time he told stories about how some nasty children throw punches, pull your hair and then run away laughing.

I thought to myself, if these mean kids do not know who I was behind the makeup anyway, I could easily get away with throwing a couple of hits myself.

Wrong, of course.

Chubby told me that to be a clown is to surpass everyone in the practice of pa-

Anyway, if ever somebody harasses you while you're in character, you could always remember what they look like and then tell security after so those hooligans will get reminded of their foliy, he explained.

Alas, there is no eye-for an-eye, tooth-fora-cooth rule in clowning!

who

Nice job

Luckily, during the hour and a half I walked around with Chubby, nobody dared do anything naughty.

But, oh, were the cameras flashing at all

Being a clown also means getting used to twirling and smiling, because everywhere you turn there will always be someone or some group wanting to take pictures with you

I went on a Saturday, so you can just imagme the crowd we drew. The more people came to us to snap away, the lighter I felt about being a clown

Sure, there were kids who immediately pulled back out of fear, but they were trumped by the hordes that couldn't wait just to shake hands and give high-fives.

I did not even have to crack a single back bending joke! Apparently, being dressed as a clown was funny and fun enough. After all, most of the park guests don't really talk much beyond "Pwedeng magpa-picture?" and "Hi, clown! What's your name?"

I guess to them clowns weren't really human, but merely characters. It's actually both delightful and sad.

Before I started braving the crowd, Chubby gave me a challenge. That was to make friends with at least 30 people.

Surprisingly, I met more than 60. And that was just in one hour and 30 minutes!

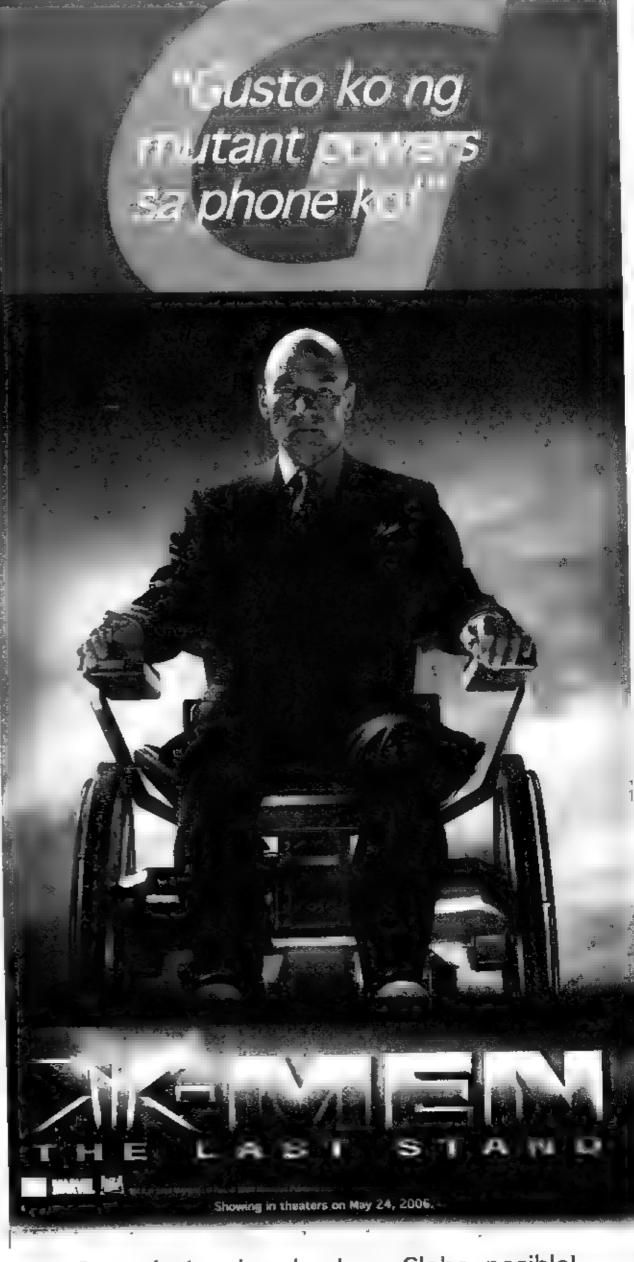
Behind the anonymity, I felt fulfilled. Although nobody knew who I was, almost everyone I met liked me without me having to say much.

I may not remember all the faces of the people I met, but I am pretty sure they will remember Chari the female clown when they look back.

I am now a resident of over a hundred photographs evidencing people's happy memories that day. And though most of them will probably never know that my real name is Vanessa, that's definitely all right with me.

Special thanks to Enchanted Kingdom Entertainment head Kat Gonzales and EK publicist and RubyComm head Ruby Paurom.

E-mail the author at ness_doctor@yahoo.com



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pwede, ang lakas mo sa Globe

Text by Bianca Consunji 2bUl Correspondent Photos by Charles Custodio

FEW YEARS AGO, I THOUGHT I WANTed to work in a hotel. When I first started Lout in college with plans of finishing Ho-Restaurant and Institution Management (HRIM), I dreamed of doing my practicum with the country's top hotels. But after a year of dealing with Math and other similarly abominable subjects, and because I wanted to write instead, I changed my mind and shifted to Journausm. (Nor that it's easy, of course)

However, the frustration was still there. I still wanted to work in a hotel, wanted to walk into a posh lobby with a sieek hairdo and sophisticated makeup. I wanted to supervise housekeeping as they went about their chores. I wanted to greet guests as they came into the hotel. And best of al., I wanted to sample the latest creations by the chefs. This showed just how much I knew about practicum training, nothing

So when I heard I was going to work as a tramee for one day at the Hotel Ph.lippine Plaza, visions of sugarphims (and chocolate cake and fore gras) started dancing in my head. Yasmine Hidalgo, the PR and Communications officer of the Hotel Philippine Plaza-formerly the Westin-to d me I was going to work there on the day they were preparing for the Australia-New Zealand Association (ANZA) ball, so I had to steel myself for some serious labor.

"Wear flats, slacks and put your hair in a bun," she said. "And bring evening clothes as well so you can do the rounds with me when the guests arrive."

Since I wanted to look polished throughout the whole day, I chose black leather kitten heeis (the closest thing I had to flats aside from flipflops, which weren't allowed) as my choice of footwear over grubby sneakers. I immediately



PUTTING the cookies in the oven

regretted my decision the moment I stepped into the kitchen—the floor was slick with nil and water, and I had to hold on to everything solid in my vicinity (a table, a chair, the good-looking chef at the dessert station) just to get my bearings.

Everyone else was wearing rubber clogs, and it took all of my self-control to avoid beating up and hiding a fellow trained in order to get her

I was also given a chef's uniform emblazoned with "Dick" in red letters on the jacket. Dick, whom the other chefs told me had left the country, was apparently a big man who was probably a foot taller and 20 pounds heavier than me. This presented some problems with the uniform, but after rolling up the sleeves and tucking in every conceivable area, I set to work

First course



CHANNELING "Psycho" with the butchering team

egg wrappers. The meat-filled cigars (or lumpia ters, and help the other chefs and trainees ar in simpler terms) were the first course for that night's ANZA event, an annual charity ball hosted by diplomats from Australia and New Zealand. The theme of the ball was "Chicago," based on the movie musical of the same title, and the organizers wanted the food to adhere to the theme

The work was basic: get a piece of egg wrapper, put a dollop of meat, add a dab of egg, roll it up and stack it on the pan. We had to make sure the rolls were all the same size, and that they were sealed neatly. Otherwise, the filling would leak while the rolls were bemg fried.

Unfortunately for me, it was nearly lunchtime when I started stuffing the meat into the wrappers, and the savory smells of the kitchen weren't helping my stomach any-a problem i didn't anticipate. I had always thought that chefs could just help themselves to anything they liked from the kitchen, but it didn't seem so. Everyone was focused on their work, and no one else seemed to be hungry. A chef or two went around tasting the dishes, but they didn't take any more than they had to

After lunch, I went back for a different set of My first task was to roll spoonfuls of meat into tasks—I had to assemble salads, fix cheese plat

range the platters for the night's menu. Part of this included cleaning black tiles and smearing mascarpone cheese and pepper on them (they were going to be used as plates for the meat rolls) and steaming and wiping glass globe bowls.

After an hour or so of helping out with the physical arrangements, the chefs put me through the other areas, the bakeshop, cold kitchen, butchering area and the choco.ate room. I couldn't resist going inside the giant freezers, although the whole time I was in them, I couldn't help but think of a classic episode of "I Love Lucy," where the unsucky Lucy Ricardo got stuck inside a freezer for hours. I asked if anyone had actually got locked an, and was answered with an amused "yes." I got out of the freezer immediately.

Some kitchen areas were much better than the others-I begged to stay in the chocolate room until my shift was over, but unfortunately, the chef in charge was a little too effective for my taste and finished the work at once. However, she let me and Charles, the photographer, pocket a few praimes after I firmshed working on a batch of chocolate truffles (I offered to come back to work some more after my shift)

LIFE Next time in a hotel, t work that into makini uxuriousunderstari a good tha

Blood and gord

I stayed in the ! minutes as well, a smell of slaughter an, but I d.dn't wa blood and gore. In the butchering to

The last area room, where I cu sugar, and topper that, I handed in pared for the bal cer Yasm ne with their names for ply

It was probab enough knowledy with the fina prethe name of the av ing. With my lucithe soup on a fame

When the night my car, glad to be sleep. My day a made me realiza wasn't as easy or would be, and I d things practicum (such as cleaning reception)

True, hotels and their business. B think of the hard your life more stand why it's alw

E-mail the at-

Text by Tarretty David 2bU! Correspondent Photo by Carlo Baviera

ONLY WATCHED A MOVIE ONCE IN Eastwood so I was very excited to work in one of "the country's best state-ofthe-art movie theaters," known for their reclining rocker seats.

Kevin Tan of Eastwood Cinemas sug gested I come in after Holy Week to have the full experience and with the US summer blockbusters next in the lineup. I showed up at the cinema offices for a \$-10 p.m. shift on a Saturday. I was met by Jing Valladarez, the theater manager, who gave me a brief background on the cinema, while Claire Sarcia gave me a crash course on the different tasks of the theater personnel. She gave me papers to review which included the orientation module. policies and procedures for cinema porters and courtesy spiels of Eastwood Cinemas.

It was the weekend when "Silent Hil." (horror), "The Sentinel" (suspense), "The Wild" (animation) and "When a Stranger Calls" (thriller) were being shown, so unagine the mix of moviegoers coming in

Selling tickets was easy: Greet the customer, click on the chosen film and desired seat, confirm transaction, print and hand the tickets plus change. But since there were a lot of customers that day and I did not want to handle money at first, I opted to stay at the counter of the Eastwood Canema Club VIP lane.

I was able to make transactions with a few cardholders but mostly I politely directed non-cardholders to the other counters. I also answered questions such as "What time is the next showing" and "May nekets no ba para sa 'Da Vmet Code?""

Before I knew it, my shift was over. After rereading the policies, I gave myself a poor rating for my first stint since I was not in the proper dress code and discreetly texted, chewed on gummy bears and chatted with some familiar faces while on the job. I asked the managers if I could come back the following Sunday for a longer shift and to try out other jobs in the cinema, and they agreed.

Second weekend

I chose Sunday for the family crowd and extended my shift from 1.8 p.m. Peak hours during Sundays is 3-5 p.m. Three theaters were showing "Mission Impossible III" and the last one was showing "Aquamarine." First task of my day: seiling tickets. Then I was led to Cinema 1 for the next task; porter.

The porter is the person at the entrance of the cinema. The job is to greet the customer (courtesy spiels!), receive, check and tear the smaller portion of the ticket, count the tickets using the numbers of the manual ticket and jot it down on the porter's report form. It is also the porter's duty to check the bags of customers and make sure balloons, ice cream in cones, cameras and pets are not allowed inside the theater. And it's also their duty to strict-



SELLING the drama,... or comedy, or action

ly implement the MTRCB ratings-meaning no kids to R-rated flicks, for instance

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The challenging thing about this job was not only fighting boredom during the dead hours but being on your feet for so long since there were no seats at the porter's area. Counting the tickets was also tedious, taking up nearly an hour.

After lunch, my next task was to asher customers to their seats. Armed with a flashlight, I thought this was the best since all I had to do was bring them to their seats and watch some trailers on the side. But, turned out Eastwood cinemas had stadium-style seating, so I constantly had to go up and down the starts. I despise the Stair-Master at the gym, so this was my punishment for always resetting the timer while my trainer was not looking.

After a couple of customers, I was out of breath and sweating inside the chilly theater. "Hats off to you, Garduce," I thought as I was chagging some juice outside the cinema. I decided to go back to my beloved VIP lane counter to rest and try to make transactions

Bad decision

Near the end of the day, I was able to make transactions (without loss or short

TRAGEOUS REE WRISTLET BAG WRIST SAND WATCH for a minimum of P500 mingle accumulated receipt purchase the SM Teens Department. hove and the dirtug over CUMAPO - MAKATI - CUMAB - MARAISON - NORTH-EBSA - STA, MESA - ORTIGAS - LAS PIRAS - BACCOR - FAIRNYEN - MAUMA - MAIRANGA - MADURRIAD CEBU - BANAO - CAGAYAN DE COM - INCUTAN - EUCENA - BACANO - MARKLAO - BAMANNAS - BATANGAS - BELGADO - BAN LAZARO - SUCRI - STA, RIISA



you stay hink of the hard goes g your life more and you'll d why it's always ig to leave a tip

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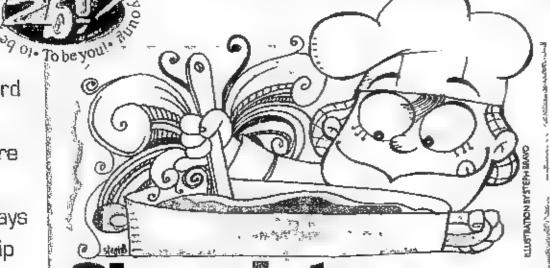
worked on was the baking out cookies, rolled them in them with mincement. After ny apron and toque and prewhere I was to assist PR offigreeting guests and getting

ato captions. for the best, as I didn't have e and experience to help out parations. I didn't want to put tel at risk with my nept serv , I probably would've spilled

us diplomat was finally over, I crept into able to catch some rest and the Hote. Philippine Plaza that being a hotel trainee as glamorous as I thought it in t even have to do the other students are required to do rooms and helping out at the

a luxury, and good service is next time you stay in a hotel, work that goes into making xurious-and you'll underys a good thing to leave a tip.

her at biancaconsunn@ya-



By April Martinez 2bUl Contributor

AFTER GRADUATING FROM MY course at the Center for Culmary Arts Manila, I immediately started my apprenticeship in Westin Philippine Plaza.

Being an apprentice proved to be a learning experience for me. I was assigned to mass production, baking batches of cookies and pastries. It was a whole new world for me: meeting and dealing with all sorts of personalities, mastering recipes and learning the value of working quickly yet effi-

At present, I am a casual assigned to the chocolare room. Chef Lito has taught

me everything about chocolates and I've really learned a lot. Handling chocolate isn't that simple. One has to melt the chocolate in the right temperature or else it won't come out as expected. Therefore, you really need to learn to be patient. Patience is especially useful when making garnishes for the desserts, because the decorations used are very delicate.

I also learned that finishing the job quickly won't guarantee the quality of the products. Rushing usually breaks the intricate decorations, entailing repetition all over again. From job to life, that's a good lesson to learn.



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Loyola Artists Guild concert

sents May Day Eve, a musical event for the benefit of the Fine Arts Festival 2007, on May 26, 8 p.m., at Party Central, 141 Mother Ignacia St., South Tri-

The event is spearheaded by the Creative Writing, Theater Arts, Information

THE LOYOLA ARTISTS GUILD PRE- Design, and Arts Management students of Ateneo de Manila. Fearured Artists include Cynthia Alexander, Cambio, Out of Body Special, Whatevuritakes, Taggu Ndios, and Empty Siren Boulevard

Tickets are at P150, available at Party Central. Call 0917 3824180, 0915-8698026 or 0915-5325336.



awful whenever bmers didn't nank you atter how mmodating nite I was

n I decided to take some noners in my lane. Bad decision, ne to know what it really felt like the other side of the counter. rs of taking my time choosing a hrowing bitchfits when it took e cierk to give my change finally

enge. whil whenever customers didn't you" no matter how accommopolite I was, I wanted to punch

some rowdy moviegoers on the face when they couldn't decide whether to sit up front or sit at the back (I later suggested it's betrer to sit at the back since the action scenes might make them puke)

After two days of working, I was rewarded with a trip inside the projection room. That proved to be the highlight of my experience.

With my experience in Eastwood cinemas, not only did I learn about the job, but also some things about myself. As a student of management, I subscribe to the behef that "the customer is king," but I realize we customers should also know basic courtesy and learn to practice patience.

So next time you plan to watch a movie, always say "thank you," blame yourself if you don't get a good seat and be a little ndy with your movie snacks.

Eastwood Cinemas is located at 4/L, Eastwood City Walk 2, For inquiries, text CTC MOV EASTWOOD to 2333 for Globe and 225 for Smart. To join the Eastwood Cinema Club: Cinema Loyalty and Privilege program, contact 6876770-74.

E-mail tammydavid@gmail.com



Win 'American 'American Idol' Final 3 Idol' goodies!

SIT UP, SING ALONG AND ROOT FOR YOUR idols, but make sure you pay attention when you watch "American Idol" on Star World tonight, because 2bU1 is giving away exclusive. limited edition "American Idol" goodies to three fans who can answer the following questions correctly about tonight's show:

1 What wi Taylor Hicks' first song be? 2. Who will be the second "American Ido!" contestant to perform?

3. Who do you think will be eliminated

E-mail your answers to starworldamer)canidol_on_2bu@yahoo.com with your complete name and contact details and get the chance to win limited American Idol radie shower kit and CD heider!

Previous winners: 1 Kai Santos

2. டம da Salita 3. Renielyn Cervantes Winners may claim their prizes from Stratworks at 7/F, 105 Rada St. Legaspi VII-

lage. Makati City, or they may call May Legaspi at 7513805 to 06 NICK OUT GOUT !!!



LIFESTYLE &

VIEWERS HAVE VOTED, AND THREE humble contestants remain in the toughest, final leg of the competition. Who among Taylor Hicks, Katharine McPhee and Elhott Yamin will become the next Ameri-

can Idol? Here's more about thus sea-

son's Final 3. Time in to American Idol season 5 on StarWorld, direct via satellite every Wednesday and Thursday, 5 p.m., with replays at 8 and 11.30 p.m. Don't miss the excitement of the grand finals on May 24 and 25, only on Star World!

Taylor Hicks

Age: 29 Hometown: Birmingham, AL

Audition city: Las Vegas Favorite female artist: Cyndi Lauper Favorite male artist: Billy Joel, Van Morrison, Bob Seger

When did you first start to sing? When I started to crawl.

Do you have any formal singing training? No. What other talents do you have?

If you don't make it on "American Idol," what will you do? Broke per-

What album would your friends be surprised you own? "The Wiggles"

Who is your American Idol? Ray What is your definition of an Ameri-

can Idol? Someone very talented and

Who is your favorite judge and why? Randy—he plays an instrument.

Katharine McPhee

Hometown: Los Angeles, CA Audition city: San Francisco Favorite female artist: Whitney Favorite male artist: Brian McKnight When did you first start to sing? 2

years old Do you have any formal singing training? Just in college and on and off with my mother.

What other talents do you have? Acting and dancing

If you don't make it on "American Idol," what will you do? Go back to actmg and dancing, musicals.

What album would your friends be surprised you own? Cirque du Soleil Who is your American Idol? Gene

What is your definition of an American Idol? A positive influence on the world who can move people through his or her artistry

Who is your favorite judge and why? Simon—he is honest.

Favorite female artist: Alicia Keys,

Elliott Yamin

Age: 27 Hometown: Richmond, VA Audition city: Boston

Gwen Stefani

Favorite male artist: Usher When did you first start to sing? 5

Do you have any formal singing training? No.

What other talents do you have? I can do funny voices and impressions.

If you don't make it on "American Idol," what will you do? Do whatever rve always done... Survivel Of course, I'd still pursue a career in music.

What are your personal goals in life? To help educate young people about music and diabetes. I want to be an inspiranon to others, I want to be a great dad someday, I want to meet Magic Johnson and have a floor seat at a Lakers game.

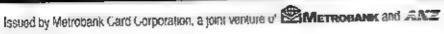
ESDAY, MAY 17, 2006

ELLIOTT Yamin, Katharine McPhee and Taylor Hicks

What is your definition of an American Idol? Someone who can inspire others to accomplish anything they set their m.nd to do

Who is your favorite judge and why? Samon—he doesn't sugarcoat anything.







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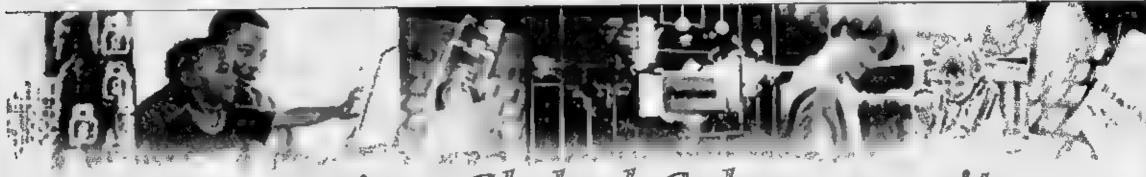
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World Telecommunication Day

Editor Aries Espinosa



WORLD TELECOMMUNICATION DAY (WTD) commemorates the founding of ITU on 17 May 1865. This year, WTD carries added significance as 17 May has been identified by the Turns phase of the World Summit on the Information Society as "World Information Society Day".

In today's interconnected and increasingly networked world, societies are vulnerable to a wide vacal information infrastructures with debilitating efto safeguard our systems and infrastructure and in business, and citizen, we need to develop a global

order to instill confidence in online trade, commerce, culture of cybersecurity. banking, telemedicine, e-government and a host of riety of threats, including deliberate attacks on criti- other applications, we need to strengthen our collective global cybersecurity. As this depends on the secufects on our economies and on our societies. In order - rity practices of each and every networked country,

This is why, the ITU Council chose to highlight the serious challenges we face in ensuring the safety and security of networked information and communication systems and adopted the theme Promoting Global Cybersecurity for World Telecommunication Day 2006.

Nokia introduces the Nokia N91 for a true mobile music experience

STORAGE FOR UP TO 3000 SONGS, plus smartphone functionality in an ultra-portable package

Manila, Philippines - Nokia recently introduced the Nokia N91 multimedia, the company's latest device optimized for mobile music consumption. With room for up to 3000 songs on the integrated 4-gigabyte hard disk, the Nokia N91 delivers a premier music experi-

In addition, the industry standard 3.5mm stereo headset jack and easy transfer of music files from your PC help make the Nokia N91 a connected mobile jukebox. Encased in stainless steel, the Nokia N91 has dedicated music keys on its face, which slide down to reveal the phone keypad. The Noxia N91 is a part of the new Nokia Nseries range, bringing you the latest multimedia technologies and smartphone functionalities. "The Nokia N91 delivers both a fantastic music experience and cutting-edge phone features," said Parikshit Bhasin, Country General Manager, Nolus Philippines. "What sets the Nokia N91 apart is the fact that it is always connected - you can download new music while on the move, add it to your favorite playlist and then share your playlist with friends. It's truly the world's best mobile connected jukebox."

Listen to Music

The Nokia N91 serves up to 12.5 hours of great sound via the included stereo headset with remote control. Enjoying your music collection has never been easier, as the Nokia N91 supports a wide range of digital music formats including MP3, M4A, AAC and WMA.

Nokia N91 is compatible with a number of accessories from industry leading brands Bose(R), Harman Kardon(r), JBL(r), and Sennheiser. In addition to using their favorite audio accessories with the Nokoa N91 through its standard 3.5mm tack, consumers can maximize their audio experience by choosing products from a line-up of Nokia tested and recommended audio accessories.

Get Music

Packed with multiple connectivity options, such as WCDMA, WLAN and Bluetooth wireless technology, the Nokia N91 makes it easy for you to find and enjoy music when and where you want. With the Nokia N91, you can quickly and easily find and purchase music over the air to your device from your operator's music

store. Manage Music

Drag and drop your personal music collection from your PC to your Nokia N91 or synchronize your recent music purchases with your PC via USB 2.0. You can also create and manage your playlists directly on your Nokia N91, or shuffle songs around to build your optimailistening experience.

Share Music

A revolutionary feature of the Nokia N91 is the possibility to share your playlists with friends by multimedia message, email or Bluetooth. Proudly show off your musical taste or simply share the latest songs that have been stuck in your head. The Nokia N91 also contains the latest multimedia technologies and smartphone functionalities, including a 2 megapixel camera for print-quality photos, email support, a full web browser and video sharing.





Enjoy 3G with the highly-acclaimed Nseries multimedia computers - Nokia N70, N71, N80, N90, and N91.

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Nokia N70 "Editors' Choice Award" CNET Asia

Mokia N80 "Best Mobile Imaging Device In Europe 2006" -Technical Image Press Association

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Nokia N91 "Mobile Innovation Awards 2005" жаркор Маусилле

Nokia Nseries See new. Hear new. Do new.

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NOKIA Connecting People

Messages



The annual observance of World Telecommunication Day, marking the founding of the International Telecommunication Union on 17 May 1865, has drawn attention to the work of ITU and the broader challenges of global communication. Prom the days of the telegraph through space-age communication, and now in cyberspace, ITU has helped to connect the world.

In recognition of this evolution, the World Summit on the Information Society, which was held in two phases (in Geneva in 2003 and in Tunis in 2005), proposed that 17 May henceforth be celebrated as World Information Society Day. The Stommit's aim was to build an open, inclusive, people-centred, knowledge-based information society that will accelerate the pace of development. This occasion now highlights the link between the great potential of information and communication technologies and our goal of accelerating the pace of development.

The Summit recognized the importance of building confidence and trust in the use of ICTs. This is reflected in the theme for this year's observance, promoting global cybersecurity. In an increasingly interconnected and networked world, it has become critically important to safeguard our vital systems and infrastructures against attack by cybercriminals, while instilling confidence in online transactions in order to promote trade, commerce, banking, telemedicine, e-government and a host of other e-applications. As this depends on the security practices of each and every networked country, business and citizen, we need to develop a global culture of cybersecurity.

I therefore urge all Member States and stakeholders to help increase global awareness of cybersecurity, and to develop an international network of unnatives and ICT-based countermeasures to enhance security and build trust in the use of information and communication technologies. This is essential for the continued growth and development of our economies, and especially important for developing countries.

More broadly, on this annual observance, let us all pledge to connect the unconnected and build a free and safe information society that will spur development for all the world's people.

KOFI A. ANNAN (Sgd.) Secretary-General United Nations



Dear Friends, World Telecommunication Day commemorates the inception of the oldest international organization in history. This 17 May 2006, on its 141st anniversary, ITU finds itself on the threshold of a new era.

During the past seven years, ITU has guided the landmark World Summit on the Information Society to its historic conclusion. World leaders gathered in Geneva in 2003 and in Tunis in 2005 to provide political backing for a road map aimed at developing and utilizing information and communication technologies in the service of humanity.

In the process, ITU's standing in the world as the lead agency in telecommunications and ICT has been clearly established. ITU has expanded its base, having pioneered the involvement of all stakeholders in the process. Governments, technological experts, social scientists, business and civil society leaders, international organizations and grassroots workers - have all been deeply engaged in laying the foundations of a more just, equitable and people-centred Information Society.

ITU has also grown in stature, having taken far-reaching steps in using its recognized expertise to reach out to the remotest regions of the globe, to the most vulnerable people, and help accelerate the pace of development. ITU has already forged partnerships with some of the greatest visionaries in government, business, civil society and international organizations aimed at connecting the unconnected through its Connect the World initiative, launched in June 2005.

This year, ITU has advocated the development of ICT to assist the disabled and to prepare for emergencies and disasters. And to ensure that the growth of ICT remains sustainable, the theme for World Telecommunication Day 2006 is Promoting Global Cybersecurity. In an increasingly networked society, safeguarding cyberspace as well as ICT systems and infrastructure has taken on real urgency. It is essential to instill confidence in online trade, commerce, banking, telemedicine, e-government and a host of other applications. It is also critical for the future social

and economic development of the world.

Achieving cybersecurity depends on the security practices of each and every networked country, business, and citizen. To guard against the sophisticated skills of cybercriminals, we need to develop a global culture of cybersecurity. This will require not only good policing and legislation but also acute threat aware-

ness and development of tough ICT-based countermeasures.

From the days of the telegraph, TTU has mastered space age communications and continues to develop its expertise in cyberspace. It now takes on the additional mantle of leading the global movement to build the Information Society. World leaders meeting at the World Summit on the Information Society in Tunis in November 2005 recognized this evolution of fTU and proposed that 17 May - World Telecommunication Day - should henceforth be celebrated as World Information Society Day.

FTU accepts this honour - and the challenge - to open another chapter in its chequered history and embark on a new journey. As we commemorate this important landmark, let us all together celebrate this first World Information Society Day!

YOSHIO UTSUMI Secretary-General International Telecommunication Union

Special PROJECT

World celebrates May 17, 2006 as the First World Information Society Day

ITU World Information Society Award presented to President Wade of Senegal and Professor Yunus of Bangladesh

GENEVA, 9 MAY 2006 - THE FIRST WORLD Information Society Day will be commemorated on 17 May 2006 to mark the inception of the International Telecommunication Union in 1865, over 140 years ago. This day, May 17, has been marked for many years now as World Telecommunication Day.

On this important occasion, the first FTU World Information Society Award will be presented to two distinguished and eminent personalities whose outstanding personal contributions have furthered the cause of building a more inclusive and equitable Information Society and helped close the digital divide. The mangural ITU Award will be given to President Abdoulage Wade of Senegal and Professor Muhammad Yunus, Managing Director of Grameen Bank, Bangladesh.

A cluster of related activities will take place over a 10-day period, 9-19 May, Geneva will be the venue for several significant steps being taken towards implementation and follow-up action on the recently-concluded World Summit on the Information Society. According to the Tunis Agenda, ITU along with UNESCO and UNDP will take the lead to facilstate implementation of the WSIS Plan of Action. As part of the observance of World Information Society Day, moderators and facilitators of action lines, such as UNCTAD, ILO and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs will meet to take the process forward. A second round of informal consultations will also be held on the setting up of the Internet Governance Forum as a follow up to the recommendations of the Summit.

Promoting cybersecurity

On 17 May, as the world observes World Telecommunications Day with the them "Promoting Global Cybersecurity", the ITU will release the results of a worldwide public survey

to assess users' trust of online transactions and awareness of cybersecurity measures. The data collected through this survey will be used to increase global awareness of cybersecurity, particularly in developing countries, and will help decision-makers in assessing the cyberspace "trust" level with a view to reviewing national and corporate strategies and priorities. An analysis of the survey will be posted on a new website. The survey will continue beyond World Information Society Day to elicit further information on these critical is-

According to ITU Secretary-General Yoshuo Utsumi, "Achieving cybersecurity depends on the security practices of each and every networked country, business, and citizen. To guard against the sophisticated skills of cyber-criminals, we need to develop a global culture of cybersecurity. This will require not only good policing and legislation but also acute threat awareness and development of tough ICT-based countermeasures."

ITU will also launch a Cybersecurity gateway that will serve as an easy-to-use information resource on national and international cybersecurity-related initiatives and websites worldwide, while promoting, developing and implementing a global culture of cybersecurity.

About World Information Society Day

In recognition of ITU as the UN agency specializing in helping the world communicate in the age of cyberspace, the World Summit on the Information Society in Tunis, November 2005, called upon the United Nations to declare 17 May, which now marks World Telecommunication Day, as World Information Society Day. Endorsed by the UN General gene Assembly, this observance takes into account the realities of the new millennium where incate.

formation and communication, aided by the digital revolution, can and must be made available to all to build a people-centred and knowledge-based Information Society that will help accelerate the pace of development. The intention of commemorating World Information Society Day is to focus global attention annually on reaching the enormous benefits of the digital revolution in information and communication technologies to all humanity.

About ITU

ITU is the leading United Nations agency for information and communication technology issues, and the global focal point for governments and the private sector in developing networks and services. For more than 140 years, ITU has coordinated shared global use of the radio spectrum, promoted international cooperation in assigning satellite orbits, worked to improve telecommunication infrastructure in the developing world, and established the worldwide standards that assure seamless interconnection of a vast range of communications systems

ITU also organizes worldwide and regional exhibitions and forums bringing together the most influential representatives of government and the telecommunications industry to exchange ideas, knowledge and technology for the benefit of the global community, and in particular the developing world.

From broadband Internet to latest-generation wireless technologies, from aeronautical and maritime navigation to radio astronomy and sateilite-based meteorology, from phone and fax services to TV broadcasting and nextgeneration networks, TVU continues to play a central role in he.ping the world communicate.



ITU World Information Society Award



His Excellency Mr. Abdoulaye Wade President Republic of Senegal

For his outstanding personal contribution towards building a global information Society for the benefit of all.

Abdoulaye Wade, Senegalese lawyer and statesman, has been the President of the Republic of Senegal since April 1, 2000.

As one of the main promoters of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and particularly as the coordinator of the ICT sector, President Wade has spoken out actively for Africa and the Information Society.

Throughout the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) process he vigorously championed the concept of digital solidarity and emphasized the potential that information and communication technologies harbor for development, with the desire that WSIS might lead to a true dialogue on the subject.

The principle of digital solidarity has been embodied in Paragraph 61 of the Geneva Declaration of Principles, which invites "all stakeholders to commit to the Digital Solidarity Agenda" set forth in the Geneva Plan of Action.

An optimist and visionary, President Wade has walked assiduously to make the concept of digital solidarity a reality through the creation of the Digital Solidarity Fund, a new voluntary funding mechanisms aimed at supporting local development projects.

The Digital Solidarity Fund was mangurated in Geneva in April 2005, and was welcomed by the World Summit on the Information Society (Geneva 2003 - Tunis 2005) as well as by the Mulenmum Summit meeting in New York in September 2005.

Professor Muhammad Yunus Managing Director Grameen Bank, Bangladesh



For his outstanding personal contribution towards building a global Information Society for the benefit of all.

Professor Muhammad Yunus' innovative approach to poverty alleviation in Bangladesh has inspired the global microcredit movement reaching out to milhous of poor women.

A noted economist, Professor Muhammad Yunus started the Grammen Bank Project in 1976, today, Grameen Bank provides collateral-free loans to 5 million clients in Bangladesh, of which 96 percent are women. Overall, the last two decades, Grameen Bank has loaned over 5 billion dollars in the poorest of the poor, while maintaining a repayment rate consistently above 98 percent.

Besides Grameen Bank Prof. Yunus has created a number of companies in Bangladesh to address diverse issues of poverty and development. Among the companies are Grameen Phone (a mobile telephone company), Grameen Cybernet (Internet Service Provider), Grameen Communications (Rural Internet Service Provider), Grameen Software company and Grameen Information Technology Park.

The Grameen Phone (Village Phone) program, through which women entrepreneurs can start a business providing wireless payphone service in rural areas of Bangiadesh, has become a legeodary success. In doing so, Grameen created a new class of women entrepreneurs who have raised themselves from poverty. Moreover, it improved the livelihoods of farmers and others who were provided access to critical market information and lifeline communications previously unattainable in some 28,000 villages of Bangladesh. More than 55,000 phones are currendy in operation, with more than 80 million people benefiting from access to ICTs.

About the ITU World Information Society Award

The ITU World Information Society Award has been created to honor individuals or institutions that made a significant contribution to promoting, building or strengthening a people-centered, development-oriented and knowledge-based Information Society. Achievement may take the term of social accomplishment, mobilization of public opinion, or a key technical innovation. The ITU World Information Society Award is presented on May 17, World Information Society Day, which is also World Telecommunication Day, commemorating the founding of ITU in 1865.

Special PROJECT

A smooth evolution to 3G and All IP with Ericsson

perators today are finding that they nave to change the way they run their businesses in order to maintain their competitiveness and ensure continued revenue growth against the backdrop of intense competition and a saturating market. As Average Revenue-Per-User (ARPU) declines, operators seek to increase usage by differentiating service offerings to capture and maintain the highend or targeted segments

As such, they need a pertner that will help them utilize new technologies and tap into the full potential of new, multimedia services. On top of the agenda is making a success of 3G (WCDMA/HSDPA and beyond), as well as evolving to all-IP in order to deliver enriched users experiences in the most cost-effective manner. For later entrants, innovative business models and go-to-market strategies are key in gaining a competitive edge over traditional and established players. With converging technologies, operators are also looking at high-performance broadband networks to enable a multiservice environment for Triple Play, as well as maximizing the potential for fixed mobile convergence.

Within such a challenging and evolving telecommunications landscape, operators are relying more and more on strategic partnerships in order to remain competitive, not just for now, but for the future. Over the years, Ericsson, too, has had to evolve from being a traditional infrastructure vendor, to being a true end-to-end so-

lutions provider In an exclusive interview with the Philippine Daily Enquirer, Ericsson President & Country Manager, Rajendra Pangrekar, shares how Ericsson has made this transition and is now

poised to help its customers ride the evolution and remain ahead of its competitors.

End-to-end solutions

*Our customers rely on our capability to provide complete telecommunications systems and make everything work together. We do this by providing everything from infrastructure and applications, to services, core handset technology and handsets." says Pangrekat

He also says that Enceson's competit,ve end-to-end solutions also puts us it in a strong position in the growing market for converged networks, adding that the recent acquisition of Morcom strengthens Ericsson's overall capabilities to provide end-to-end next-generation network solutions all the way from design to rollout and professional services.

Pangrekar attributes Ericsson's success in offering an end-to-end portfoho to a few key factors.

"At Ericsson, one of our rop priorities is to understand the end-user needs. Through the Ericsson Consumer and Enterprise Lab, as well as our Business Consulting Unit, we focus on understanding operator, enterprise and consumer needs in different markets. We work with many operators to develop their business models and find new consumer and enterorise services which are easy to use, regardless of the enabling technolo-

Pangrekar also points out that Ericsson's customers benefit from its global experiences, learnings and best practices that is gained from operator expenences in more than 140 countries worldwide

Last, but not least, Ericsson has the industry's strongest R&D commitment, with 20,000 granted patents worldwide. It is also the undisputed leader in UMTS/WCDMA patents.

Making a success of 3G and beyond

According to Pangrekar, there are three critical success factors in making WCDMA and HSDPA a success: Having a high quality, high performance network, the right go-to-market strat-

launch of new revenue-generating, on the operational risk by operating services with compelling content & mmovative pricing that will provide returns on unvestments.

"3G is a complex technology and we are the undisputed leader in this area, being a prime supplier to 50 of the 96 commercially launched WCD-MA networks worldwide. Furthermore, over half of all WCDMA launches in 2005 were powered by Ericsson," says Pangrekar.

Amother major challenge, he says, is for operators to ensure a smooth inregration from 2G to 3G, and this is where Ericsson's expertise and experience working with many other operators in Europe, Asia and the Americas, come into play.

There is nothing worse than to have delays in the commercial launch or launching a network with 2G-3G handover problems and a poor quality network, as the customer's first experience with 3G will have a big impact on whether or not he continues to use it. We have worked with such prob-Jeurs in a various situations in many other countries before, and we have the expertise to bridge the challenges of seamless network evolution," he

Ericsson is the world leader in designing, building and optimizing mobile networks. Its 21,000 service professionals located all around the globe provide 24/7 support of networks with more than 700 million subscribers. Over the past two decades, Encsson has deployed turnkey networks for more than 275 customers in 140 countries. It also has more than 10 years of experience in multi-vendor integration projects for 120 operators worldwide.

Where 3G is concerned, Pangrekar says that Eriesson has 65 network tuning, design, strategy or security projects completed or ongoing, almost half of which employ Ericsson's worldleading expertise in WCDMA radio access network runing."

Pangrekar also reveals that due to Encsson's extensive expenence with 3G networks, more and more cus-

egy and launch plan, and the fast tomers are relying on Ericsson to take the network and utilizing synergies within Ericsson's global service delivery organization.

This will allow out customers to focus on the front-end of the business, securing existing revenue and creating new revenue greams, customer acquisition and retention,* he explains, adding that Ericsson has the strongest track record in Managed Services, ranging from establishing, operating and managing the day-today operations of a customer's network, to hosting content, applications and enablers.

'In all Managed Services contracts (excluding hosting), we are managing perworks that, together, serve more than 58 million subscribers worldwide. Since 2002, we have officially announced more than 80 Managed Services contracts," he adds.

In Asia, some of the more recent Managed Services (Operations) contracts include Bharti-Tele Ventures in India, Warid Telecom in Pakisian and Maxis in Malaysia. Among 3G Managed Services contracts include 3UK, Huich Italy, Huich Hong Kong, Maxis Malaysia, PT Natrindo Indonesia, Vorlatione Netberlands, and many

Apart from Managed Operations, Pangrekar points out that Ericsson understands the operators' need to provide the right services at the right

"We are in a unique position to be a one-stop partner to operators with a full end to-end portfolio to ensure a fast service launch. Apart from our Consumer and Enterprise Labs and Business Consulting, we also work with Content and Applications through the Eriesson Mobility World, and offer a complete network solution from Access Layer to Service Layer, as well as Systems Integration. With Hosting, the service will be integrated, hosted and managed by Ericsson, and we will take on the overall responsibility for the service, including Digital Rights Management, content aggregation and platform development," he

Pangrekar says that Ericsson also apports 3G launches through the sharing of its business expertise, primarily via Ericsson Business Consulting. Ericsson has supported many of its customers to develop successful goto-market strategies and plans that focuses on capturing the right target markets and getting a faster return on

Efficient Evolution to all-IP

Ericsson's understanding of the complexity of third generation mobile technologies extends into the core domain as well, where it leads the telecom industry in the introduction of layered architecture.

"The focus is on building Bexible and cost-efficient networks in a way that makes it easy for the operator to start handling new services. Ericsson's approach is to structure a network mto independent areas of connectivity, control and services; thereby keeping the core elements apart from one another, in this way, when an operator wants to introduce new services or equipment into one layer it is not necessary to re-engineer the network or replace the hardware. Such design a. lows operators much more flexibility than with conventional networks, which are designed as monolithic systerns from top to bottom," explains. Panerekar.

Enesson's mobile softswitch is the first step toward an all-IP core network. By introducing a layered architecture, with centralized operations and a common flexible core network, Ericsson's mobile softswirch ensures a common foundation for new con-

The drive towards convergence of the internet and mobile domains over All-IP systems is another area in which Ericsson is instrumental. The company recognizes the benefits All-IP will bring in terms of service creation, integration and cost savings for both operators and content providers. The technology that will ultimately be used for convergence is called the IP Multimedia Sobsystem (IMS) - a new stan-

dard that allows data, speech, fixed and mobile to converge over an IP. based infrastructure -- allowing operators and enterprises to launch IP services quickly while evolving to a converged all-IP environment Ericsson IMS enables flexible application development and smooth deployment of multiples applications and services. Encsson has signed 19 IMS system contracts for commercial launch and 40 additions, thals.

Broadband everywhere

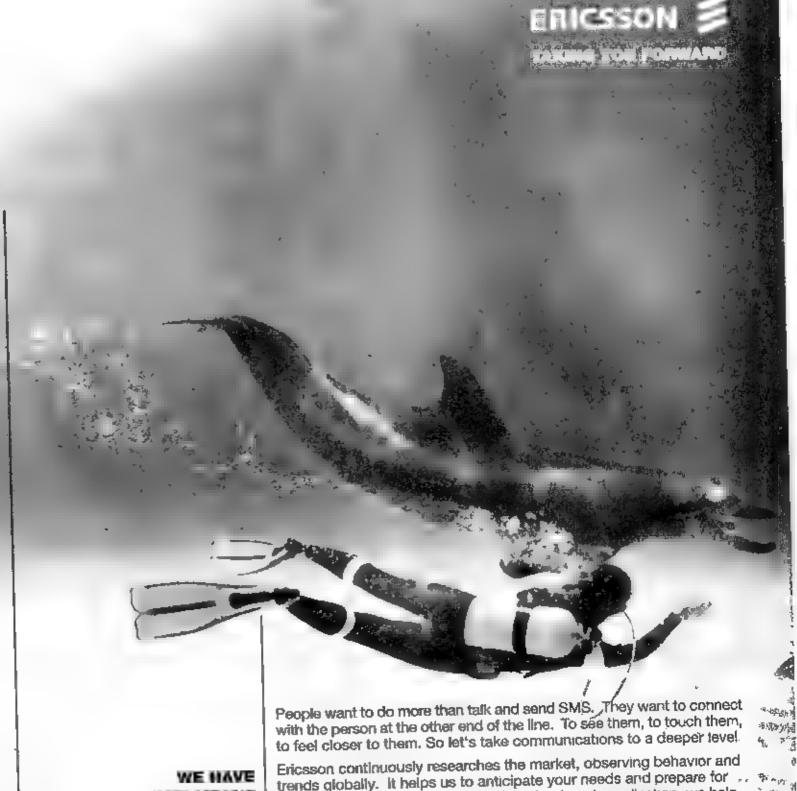
With extremely low broadband penetration levels in most South-East Asian nations, Pangrekar believes that the high speed and extensive coverage enabled by HSDPA (WCDMA-evolved) makes mobile broadband the quickest and the most cost-effective way to boost broadband penetration in the region.

"Leveraging on the existing WCD-MA (3G network) or HSDPA mobile network is the best way to expand and provide telecommunication services, including broadband services outside of the urban areas", he adds.

Last year, Ericsson demonstrated the first live High Speed Downlink Packet Access (HSDPA) in South East Asia. "HSDPA represents the first essen, a, step towards making Broadband Everywhere a reality. With HSD-PA, mobile phone users will be able to experience data downloads and streaming applications at speeds of up to 11 megabit-per-second (mbps) Translated into consumer usage, this means it will take around 4 seconds to download one minute of audio, 19 seconds to download a 200kB Power Point slideshow, and 1 second to downspad a 30kB JPEG image," says Mr. Pangrekar.

Ericsson has the industry's strongest roadmap in WCDMA evolution, presently powering around 30 HSDPA networks around the world, with commercial raunches in seven countries

In the Philippines, Ericsson began its operations in 1988 and today is a leading provider of fixed and mobile solutions to the country's telecommunications operators. Based in Pasig City, the company employs close to 200 tocas employees.



SAY THIS IS ONE OF YOUR

5 %

TODAY'S COMMUNICATIONS CAN BRING THEM THIS CLOSE TO OTHERS

THE MEANS TO TAKE THEIR INTERACTION TO ANOTHER

LEVET

trends globally. It helps us to anticipate your needs and prepare for ... them. From these insights, through technology to realization, we help provide a richer world of interaction. A world designed to bring people together.

On World Telecommunications Day, let's celebrate this world of enriched communications for the people of the Philippines.

eriesson.com/forward

Special PROJECT

Biography of NTC Commissioner Ronald Olivar Solis

Solis is the Commissioner of the National Telecommunications Commis- 1995. Prior to that, he was a Junior sion (NTC). He was appointed to this position by President Gioria Macapagal-Arroyo on January, 2004. Before 1992 to 1993. being named to lead the NTC, he was a Senior Partner of the Solis and Med- ciate of the Cuevas, dela Cuesta, and ina Law Office from 1995 to January de las Alas Law Office from 1988 to years, the very affable NTC Commis-2004. He was also a Law Professor of 1992. He was named Outstanding the Philippine Law School and was Club President, Rotary International with the faculty of the college from 1999-2003. He also, served with disterction as one of the volunteer private prosecutors in the celebrated impeachment trial of their President Joseph Ejercito Estrada. He honed his

Magno Law Offices from 1993 to Partner in the law office of Medel, Proceedings and Labor Law. Macom, del Rosario and Collado from

He then served as the Senior Asso-District 3800, RY 2001 - 2002. He is also an outstanding member of nution groups and other affiliations.

legal expertise as a senior partner of istrative litigations, that include among the province of Antique.

COMMISSIONER RONALD OLIVAR the Victoriano, Sohs, Medina and others, Telecommunications Practice, Corporate Recovery and Rehabilitation Cases, Corporate Disputes, Immigration

> Commissioner Solis has attended innumerable conferences and seminars held in almost all parts of the world. Young and energetic at 44 sioner is presently residing at Cotton Woods Heights, Antipolo City, with his lovely wife, Victoria Baterina- Solis of Ilocos Sur and Baguno City with merous professional, socio-civic actheir three precocious children: Jesse Pauline, Jose Miguel and Jillian As a lawyer, his principal areas of Samantha. Commissioner Solis practice are Criminal, Civil and Admin-comes from a prominent family from

Globelines gives Internet connectivity to Boracay beachgoers

to connect to the Internet even while in the beaches of Boracay with Worldpass, its Internet service that allows Internet access anytime, anywhere,

Globelines launched last month the search for the Bora Beach Babe and Hunk wherein beachgoers could post their sexiest swim suit photos at the Globelines website www.globelines.com.ph. Purchase a P100 Worldpass prepaid voucher to get to post that sexiest swim swear shot at the Globelines website and also place a vote on a picture of choice. To be able to vote, buy a PSO Worldpass prepaid voucher from any Globelines Payments and Services Center and dealers nationwide.

The Bora Beach Babe and Hunk contest will run from April 1 to May 31, 2006. The winners, who will be announced on June 15, 2006, will get an overnight stay for two at the Boracay Regency Beach Resort.

Workipass is for individuals who are al-

GLOBELINES ALLOWS ITS SUBSCRIBERS ways on the move and require reliable internet connection wherever they go. With Worldpass, Globelines puts all types of internet connectivity under one account so subscribers get instant Internet access anywhere and anytime.

Worldpass gives subscribers the flexibility to access the Internet in three ways - via broadband from any Globelines-connected PC, dial-up from any computer using any landline within the country, or Wi-Fi from any GlobeQUEST WiZ hotspot using a Wi-Pi enabled laptop, PDA or mobile phone.

This all-in-one mobile Internet access is being offered as a postpaid account with a low monthly consumable fee of only P250 and in prepaid with vouchers in P20, P50 and P100 denominations.

Worldpass has the following hotel partners in Boracay Boracay Beach Chalets, Le Soleil de Boracay, Boracay Regency Beach Resort, Red Coconut Beach Hotel and Mango Ray Resort

OUR SOLUTIONS LET YOU THINK AHEAD AND MOVE AHEAD.



'At GlobeQUEST, we believe in planning shead. We make sure that all our business solutions are always innovative to prevent you. · from being limited by existing technology, in fact, we were the first to offer International Private Line Circuits (IPLCs) using Fiber Optictechnology, allowing you to communicate with your offices abroad at lightning speed. GlobeQUEST was also the first to bring Pligh-Speed Broadband Internet in the security and offer wireless fidelity (WiFi) services nationwide through WiZ (Wireless Internet Zone) giving you access to the Internet outside your home and office. Through BAX (Broadbank) Access Services), we allow ultra high speed connectivity up to Gigablis of capacity across the country. With Internet Protocol Virtual Private Network (IP-VPN), you can access corporate data from different offices securely over the Internet. We evolve our products to matrix your needs, equipping you with everything you need to move forward. We are built for change. If your goal is to move ahead, call us.

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Corporate Voice; Broadhand Access (BAX), Date Control: 10 -- -

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Giebe

GlobeQUEST WiZ brings superior wireless Internet connectivity to mobile professionals

AS MORE AND MORE PEOPLE BRING their work outside the office, demand for wireless internet connectivity also begin to grow rapidly. Such need has already spawned the creation of public access

provide Wi-Fi (Wireless Fidelity) access in locations as diverse as restaurants, coffee shops, airports, hotels, schools, offices, convention centers and mails.

GiobeQUEST, the corporate business group of Innove Communications, thus, takes center stage in supplying the best network solution that will make strategic GlobeQUEST Wireless Internet Zones as workstations for mobile professionals, sales people and other field workers.

So far, GiobeQUEST has already partnered with a number of popular establishments nationwide, providing them with superior managed end-to-end solutions to ensure better flexibility, reliability and accessibility of their Wi-Fi service.

GlobeQUEST WiZ is a new and exciting wireless broadband Internet service using the IEEE 802.11b or Wi-Fi wireless networking standard to provide secure and renable wireless connectivity to anyone with a Wi-Fi enabled laptop or PDA (personal digital assistant), and thus, allow them to access their email, play online surf the Net or even m

A Wi-Fi network can be used to connect computers to each other, to the Internet, and even to wired networks which use 802.3 dubbed as the Ethernet. Wi-Fi networks operate in the unlicensed 2.4GHz and 5GHz radio bands with an 11Mbps (802,11b) or 54Mbps (802,11g) data rate or with products that contain both bands (dual band) so they can provide similar performance equivalent to the basic 10BaseT wired Ethernet networks.

GlobeQUEST's vision is to provide Wi-Fi facilities to major key establishments where people converge for business, as well as promote Wi Fi as a strategic tool for education, local government projects, product advertisements, and foreign ventures, among others. Given this, Globe-OUEST has expanded to provide coverage not only in Metro Manila but to 13 provinces in the country, namely Cebu, Davae, Bohol, Bacolod, Tacloban, Pampanga, General Santos, Baguio, Ciongapo, Cavite, Batangas, Laguna, and Ormoc, making true its commitment to transform the Philippines into a Wi-Fi ter-

GlobeQUEST has also pioneered the "HorZones" which provide WiZ Wi-Pi access to clusters of establishments within the identified zone/sector such as industrial parks, commercial centers, residenrial subdivisions, mixed-use complex, business districts, and other business communities that require flexibility and productivity. GlobeQUEST WiZ HotZones complement a parmership with the GlobeQUEST WiZ HotSpots with certification from both the establishment and the property management.

GlobeQUEST WiZ can be experienced through Prepaid Plans in P100 (50 minures), P400 (200 minutes) and P1,000 (500 minutes) denominations; or through GlobeQUEST's Universal Access Service, ranging from the lowest monthly plan of P350 for 10 hours to as high as

P2,500 for unlimited use. Likewise, by texting WIZ ON to 2333, Globe Handyphone postpaid subscribers can get their user 1Ds and password through SMS which can be used to log-in at any WIZ hotzone. WIZ usages will be charged to the subscriber's monthly bill at PhP2.00/minute. Also, GlobeQUEST has partnered with myAyala.com thereby alowing customers to purchase a Globe-OUEST WiZ account online through a credit card.

At the same time, GlobeQUEST WiZ allows Wi-Fi Roaming-in for customers of Pacific Internet, Worldpass, BOINGO Wireless, iPass, and Deutsche Telekom to access wireless broadband Internet

For more information log on to www.wiz.globequest.com.ph or call the GlobeQUEST Hotline 79-QUEST.

World Telecommunication Day

Editor Aries Espinosa



May 17, 2006: The FIRST ever World Information Society Day

ery (Geneva 2003 - Tunis 2005) has achieved a common global understanding of the key principles that will determine peoples' ability to harness the potential of ICTs. The Summit has also created a unique impetus towards a more inclusive Information Society and has set forth an Agenda for Action

To keep up this momentum, the Summit called upon the United Nations to proclaim May 17 as World Information Society Day. A resolution to this effect was adopted by the UN General Assembly on March 27, 2006.

Celebrating the first World information Society Day, a

action lines will take place from May 9 to 23.

On this important occasion, ITU will present the ITU World Information Society Award to His Excellency Abdoulaye Wade, President of the Republic of Senegal and Professor Muhammad Yunus, Managing Director of the Grameen Bank, Bangladesh.

On May 17, ITU commemorates the first World Informaiton Society Day. For more than 140 years, ITU has been the global focal point in developing ICT networks and services for all the world's inhabitants. As the UN agency specializing in helping the world communicate, ITU has taken

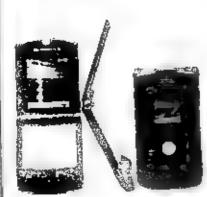
THE WORLD SUMMIT ON THE INFORMATION SOCI- series of events related to the implementation of the WSIS the lead in the cyberage to connect the unconnected so that everyone can benefit from the vast potential of the digital

Recognizing this evolution, the World Summit on the Information Society called upon the United Nations to declare May 17, which marks World Telecommunication Day, as World Information Society Day to raise awareness of the importance of ICT in bringing enormous possibilities to societies and economies. It also highlights a global commitment to contribute to an emerging people centered and development-oriented Information Society that aims to meet the aspirations of all humanity.



motorola's RAZR V3x wins Besi Jesm Handset 2006

Motorola's RAZR V3x handset was recognized by the GSM Association as the 'Best 3GSM Handset 2006'. The stunning Motorola RAZR V3x was the talk of the town when it secured the most prestigious award at the association's annual awa ceremony at the 3GSM World Congress in Barcelona. With its ultra-slim clamsheil form and clever integration of the design features that made the RAZR the company's most globally acclaimed product, the Matarola RAZR V3x is the ultimate in mobile entertainment devices. Delivering an impressive range of media tools, including a 2megapixel camera, real-time twoway video calling, still and moving image capture, progressive downloading and 3D graphics this UMTS/3G handset has it all. For more information on 3GSM visit: www.motorola.com/3gsm.



Motorola's RAZR ¥3 wins CNET Asia Readers' Choice award

Motorola's Special Edition RAZR V3 Black was recently voted Best Looking Mobile Phone, at the CNET Asia Reader's Choice Awards. Heralding its sleek, seamless design, CNET awarded the Motorola V3 Black the Gold Seal for the Best Looking Phone Category. The bottom line according to CNET Asia? 'It's hard to go past the Motorola RAZR V3 for looks. The black version is even more stylish that its silver predecesson?



MOTOROLA



3GSM Handset of the Year Award







Special PROJECT

Messages



The National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) joins the World in celebrating World Telecommunication Day 2006 with its theme "Promoting Global Cybersecurity". The United Nation (UN), in this year's celebration, is calling for international organizations to consider measures to foster a global culture of cybersecurity and invite Member States to develop throughout their societies a culture of cybersecurity in the application and use of information technologies. The UN also stressed the necessity to facilitate the transfer of information technology and capacity-building to developing countries, in order to help them to take measures in cybersecurity. This is a positive step and very much welcomed by the NTC.

The progress and development in information and communucations technology (ICT) in telecommunications services and Internet access have further intensified the pace of innovation and has transformed business models in the relecommunications industry substantially. Currently, telecommunications industries experience a new fundamental transformation which is characterized by a shift through convergence and integration towards so-called Next Generation Networks (NGN). Several networks (PSTN, Mobile, IP, Cable TV) become connected under the IP standard which allows ubiquitous access to services (both fixed and mobile), becoming however, more vulnerable

to cybersecurity threats and attacks. With the emergence of new IP based services, regulators face many difficult challenges to implement efficient use of technological resources and affordable services. Regulatory uncertainty will remain if no stable and predictable regulatory framework is developed. Hence, it is important to espouse United Nations' campaign on the global culture of cybersecurity and the protection of critical information infrastructure and enhance efforts to close the digital divide to achieve universal access to information and communication technologies and services. It is also the goal of the Commission to raise awareness in the sector and the need to defend information and communications systems against the threat of cyber attack, and continue to promote cooperation among appropriate entities in order to enhance exchange of technical information in the field of information and communication network security.

At present, the government is working on several key activities in an effort to come up with a more integrated approach to cybersecurity. One of the key mutiatives is the creation of the Task Porce on Security of Critical Infrastructure (TFSCI) and Government Computer Security and Incident Response Team (G-CSIRT). The task now is to prepare the National Strategy for the Protection of Critical Cyber Infrastructure and formulation and implementation of national plan.

It is our hope that through the activities lined up in the celebration of World Telecommunications Day 2006 we will be able to instill cybersecurity awareness and established a mechanism for national and international security coordination

RONALD QUIVAR SOLIS Commissioner National Telecommunication Commission



Today we celebrate the very first World Information Society Day!

Traditionally, May 17 is observed every year as World Telecommunication Day, under the auspices of the United Nations and its specialized arm for relecommunications, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). However last year, in Turnsia, the World Summit on the Information Society called on the United Nations to declare that May 17 henceforth be cele-

brated as World Information Society Day. I believe that this provides tacit recognition of the reality that telecommunications, information technology and their related fields are fast converging into what we now know as information and Communications Technologies (ICT). The Commission of Information and Communications Technology (CPCT), the government body that has been officially designated as the ITU Administration for our country, is pleased to partner with the Philippine Electronics and Telecommunications Federation (PE-TEP) and the Philippine Chamber of Telecommunications Operators (PCTO) in our country's observance of WTD/WiSD. We should also note that in the Philippines, we have traditionally celebrated the National Electromes and Telecommunications Week (NETW) every May 17-23.

We also wish to commend the media organizations who agreed to support the celebration of WFD/WISD under the initistive of the Publications, Media and Events Group of CD Cas-

tro Consultancy, Inc. (CDCCI). I have often wondered, how do we bring the benefits of the Information Society to every Filipino? How do we make the value of a World Telecommunication Day more apparent and real to all Filipinos? How do we reach the unserved and underserved

areas of our archipelago? In search of answers to these questions, PETEF, PCTO, CICT and the NTC have organized a two-day conference and workshop with the theme: "MMX Digital for all Filipinos". Our goal is no less than to achieve one of President Arroyo's ten-point agenda items, which is "Degital Infrastructure for All" by the year 2010.

in closing, let me echo the global theme of WTD 2006, which is "Promoting Global Cybersecurity". The CICT reiterates its call for the appropriate data privacy and cybersecurity legislation, which will go a long way in supporting our government's thrust in promoting the "Philippine Cyberservices Corridor" as the trusted source for global services.

Thank you very much for joining us in our celebration of

WTD/WISD, Mabolyay! DAMIAN DOMINGO O. MAPA Commissioner Commission on Information and Communications Technology

National Telecommunications Commission 2005 Accomplishment / Performance Report

Period Covered: January - December 2005

A. General

 eNTC Project Phase I was bidded out and awarded to joint partners GeoSpatial Solutions Inc. and Philkoei International, Inc. for a contract price amounting to PhP 15.250 Million

Preparation of eNTC detailed design specification requirements -Systems design and development

- NTC Web Portal
- Walk-in System for Examination (WISE)
- Document imaging/Database buildup
- Provision of hardware, software and services
- Finalized the NTC reorganization bill entitled "An Act Reorganizing the National Telecommunications Commission into the National Information and Communications Commission, Defining its Powers and Functions and Appropriating Funds Therefor and submitted the bill to Congress
- Issued circular governing rules and regulations on the allocation and assignment of Third Generation (3G) radio frequency bands 825 -845 MHz, 870 - 890 MHz; 1880 - 1900 MHz; 1920 - 1980 MHz, 2110 2170 MHz, 2010 - 2025 MHz.
- Issued an Explanatory Memorandum and circular on Voice over Broadcast Band. Internet Protocol (V oIP)
- Initiated study on adopting an overall competition policy framework in both the telecoms and broadcast industries
- Undertook public hearing and consultation on Digital FM Radio Broadcast and Low Power Radio Station
- Created a Technical Working Group (TWG) regarding technical standards and operating guidelines for Digital Television Broadcast-
- Resolved the issue on the cablecasting of "chairoom channels" by cable operators with the issuance of guidelines made by NTC together with cable operators and stakeholders.
- Issued an Office Order entitled "New Guidelines for the Modification of CATV Application Evaluation' to address the issue of overbuilding on CATV operation.
- Issued a draft circular for the creation of an intellectual Property Unit for the NTC which shall be tasked to monitor programs being shown by CATV operators and to determine whether the said programs are authorized to be received, distributed or transmitted by the CATV operator.
- Issued circular on Head-End Sharing/Consolidation among CATV Operators.
- Issued circular on frequency allocation and block arrangements for Fixed Wireless Access Systems in the bands 3.4 - 3.6 GHz, and 10.15 - 10.65 GHz.
- Issued circular on frequency band allocations for Broadband Wireless Access for fixed, nomadic and mobile networks.
- 450 470 MHz; 1900 1910 MHz; 1980 1990 MHz; 2400 2483 MHz, 2500 - 2700 MHz, 3400 - 3600 MHz; 5150 - 5350 MHz; 5470-5850 MHz; and 10150 - 10650 MHz.
 - Issued circular on extension of the UHF TV Broadcast band.

- Conducted public hearing on the formulation of guidelines on the operation of short range devices and Radio Frequency Identification/s
- Issued circular on rules and regulations on broadcast messaging service or rules against what is commonly known as "text spam"
- Hosted the 4th Joint Sectoral Committee (JSC) Meeting of ASEAN Technical Regulators' Council (ATRC) held on March 16 -17,2005 at the Holiday Inn Galleria Manila

B. Memorandum Circulars Issued

A total of 13 Memorandum Circulars were issued in 2005

- Memorandum Circular 08-08-2004A Additional Rules and Regulations on the Purchase, Sale, Lease and/or Retail of Mobile Phones.
- Memorandum Circular 01-01-2005 Schedule of Regular Radio Operator's Examination in the Regional Offices for the Year 2005
- Memorandum Circular 02-02-2005 Frequency Allocation and Block Arrangements for Fixed Wireless Access Systems in the Bands 3.4-3.6 GHz and 10 15-10.65 GHz.
- Memorandum Circular 03-03-2005 Rules and Regulations on Broadcast Messaging Service.
- · Memorandum Circular 04-07-2005 Extension of the UHF TV
- Memorandum Circular 05-08-2005 Voice over Internet Protocol
- Memorandum Circular 06-08-2005 Frequency Band Allocations for Broadband Wireless Access.
- Memorandum Circular 07-08 2005 Rules and Regulations on the Allocation and Assignment of 3G Radio Frequency Bands.
- Memorandum Circular 08-11 2005 Resterating Strict Compliance with Executive Order No. 255 dated July 25, 1987 (Mandatory playing of original Pilipino musical compositions in all radio stations with musical format programs)
- Memorandum Circular 09-11-2005 Frequency Allocation for Telemetry and other Similar Data Systems.
- Memorandum Circular 10-11-2005 Guidelines on the cablecastmg of CATV channels with "chatroom" formats
- Memorandum Circular 11-11-2005 Guidelines for Sharing/Consolidation of Head-end Facilities of Cable Television Stations
- Memorandum Circular 07-08-2005C Correction to Section 6.4 and Section 7.1(a) of Memorandum Circular No. 07-08-2005

C. Additional Telecom Operators and Broadcast Stations

- Authorizations granted to 2 AM, 3 TV stations and 23 CATV Operat
- Issued Certificates of Registration to 57 additional VAS Operators
- D. Operational Accomplishments
- Issued 242,462 licenses, permits and certificates.
- Monitored 317,046 frequency channels.
- Conducted 52,290 inspections/investigations.
- 29,745 frequency assignments made
- Disposed 274 authorization and 1,859 administrative cases

E. Total Revenue Generation

Generated total collections amounting to PHP 2,268,805,306.97

The need for new reforms in RP telecoms

By: Cesar D. Castro President and Principal Consultant CD Castro Consultancy, Inc.

PRESIDENT GLORIA MACAPAgal-Arroyo in her inaugural address as the 14th President of the Republic of the Philippines outlined her vision for the country for the next six years. In her speech, she outlined the 10-point agenda of her government, one that she referred to as her 10point Beat the Odds blueprint This agenda will also serve as the fundamental guide for our nation's economic blueprint from this year up to the year 2010.

In her 10-point agenda, President Arroyo cited the need for "The decentralization of progress around the nation through the use of transportation networks and the digital infrastructure".

From the perspective of the private sector in the country, made up of the enterprises that either provide the information and communications services or are their main users and that of civil society, representing all the other users of information and communications services in our country, the inclusion of the term "digital infrastructure" can and should be considered as most appropriate and truly right in time.

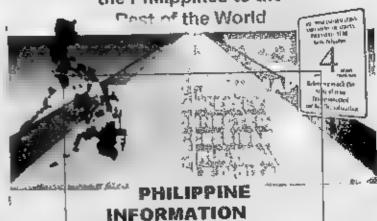
That move has placed information and communications or what is now more popularly referred to as "ICT" in the government's official road map to development

and progress.

For indeed the building of a digital infrastructure, or what we have in the past referred to as the Philippine Information Infrastructure or PII, must really an integral part of every nation's nearterm as well as in both its medium and long-term development plans. President Macapagal-Arroyo has clearly indicated that her 10-point agenda will cover her term of office and will serve as the blueprint that should be able to respond to the demand for more prosperity for the greatest number of our people. One that may not eradicate poverty in our country but will be minimize its burdens upon our people and na-

A well-planned, progressively evolving, and universally accessible national information infrastructure serves as the cornerstone of the efforts of every nation to benefit from the fast emerging information Society. The Philipplacs particularly with its present conditions both from the perspective of problems and opportunities will not be an exception to this principle of development.

It is this national digital infrastructure that will move data, information, and more importantly, knowledge from one point to another in the country, will allow Connecting Filipinos and the Philippines to the Post of the World



COMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THE PHILIPPINES

CD CASTRO CONSULTANCY, INC.

one person to communicate with cess and the provision of univer-

another whether he or she may be in the Philippines or is somewhere else in the world, and will allow men to communicate with machines e.g. computers as weal as machines communicate with other machines.

it is this digital infrastructure, you may want to call it the PII or by any other name, that holds the key to where in the Philippines will have more progress than another one. Thus, development must be planned to be as balanced as possible. Universal ac-

sal service are, therefore, two pillars of national digital infrastructure development process.

Large urban centers must have all types of broadband access while agricultural centers and smaller cities must have the kind of ICT services that are needed in that environment. Large, poverty stricken, rural areas must have similar but different type of ICT services, services that the people in those areas need. There is, therefore, an urgent need for a

TELECOM/ 63

The Smart 3G experience is really going places

The SMART 3G rollout nationwide is using the same SMART commitment in giving more to the most people. Soon we'll be a 3G country, and we'll be doing things on our cell phones once only dreamt of.

The story of SMART 3G began earlier than many of us may think. It's a story of

First to Test

It was way back in January 2001 when SMART conducted trials for its first ex-

Philippines. By then it already installed base stations that were easily 3G-up-

First to Demo in an International Conference

Last year the world body GSM Association's IREG (Inter-working Roaming Expert Group) was bosted by SMART in Cebu. One of the rare times it was held outside of Europe, the event included SMART GSM and WiFi solutions and

perimental 3G wireless system in the highlighted by the first media demonstration of SMART's 3G International Roaming capabilities with its partner, Telecom Italia Mobile.

First Time on TV

PLDT and SMART Chairman Manny Pangilinan's 3G demo video call to celebrity Kris Aquino on TV made us marvel at the possibility of seeing the person we're talking to, and we're just starting to understand what it all

First Time in Festivals

SMART 3G linked the Simulog and Atiatihan festivals early this year. SMART 3G gave a glimpse of it all, the sound, the color, and even the feeling of actually being there.

First in Schools

SMART 3G continues its way to our schools, with Ateneo de Manila and De la Salle Universities hosting demos on their campuses. Both faculty and students alike were learning the new promises of

3G - video calling, video streaming, and music downloads. Everything indeed is building up; and this is only the begin-

You can look forward to even more as SMART 3G, the Real 3G, makes more demos to even more people, events, and institutions around the country. It's worthwhile to spread the word: what you've eagerly dreamt of is coming very soon.

heta://www.smart.cogt.ph/SMART/Ser-

vices/3G/Milestones.htm

Frequently Asked Questions about 50

1. What is 3G?

3G literally means "3rd Generation" With 3G, you can enjoy video calling, high-speed, video streaming and mobile Internet six times faster than the current GSM/GPRS

2. What services will I enjoy with 3G?

With 3G, subscribers can avail of new, cuttingedge services such as:

- Video Calling
- Allows subscribers to see the called party live.

 Video Streaming Watch videos directly from the net real-time. It's

- like watching TV on your phone. High Speed Mobile Internet Access
- Surf the web at broadband speed.
- Video and Audio Download of Selected Con-

Download your favorate clips and music.

3. What handsets can support 3G?

3G capable handsets such as Nolda 6680, Nolda N70, Nokia N90 and Sony Ericsson K60B. Other

handsets will be available soon.

4. Can i still text, call and download while using 3G?

Yes. You may continue to use ALL other Smart services on top of the Smart 3G unique features and

5. How do I set-up my phone?

There are three steps to be able to access 3G:

- Step 1 Using your 3G handset
- Go to Tools? Settings? Network Mode? select Dual Mode
- Step 2

Activate your handset by texting Set 3G and send to 211

Step 3

Save Settings sent by 333. Key in 1234 when phonebook

To find-out if you're on 3G Service, there will be a 3G scon at the top left most Portion of your screen (for NOKIA handsets) or bubble like image (for SONY ERICSSON)

6. How can I access 3G content?

There are three (3) ways to access 3G content:

- a. Go to Services Menu of your phone Type http://wap.smart.com.ph/3G in your
- phone browser
- b. Text SMART3G to 211
- SMART wapsite Go to http://wap.smart.com.ph Click on SMART 3G

7. What are the services being offered in 3G?

There are a number of services distinct to 3G There is Video Calling, video Streaming of TV (Ex. GMA 7 and ABS-CBN) Music, Movies and Internet net Browsing at broadband speed.

8. How do I video call?

- a. Enter the desired number of choose from your
- b. Click on Options and select Video Call (for Nokia) or Press One Touch Acces (for Sony Ericsson) and wait for your video call connection.

How do I video stream?

a. Go to wap.smart.com.ph/3G on your phone's browser.

c. To end session, go to options and select exit.

b. Click on the link of the content you want to

10. How do I browse the internet?

- a. Go to your phone's web browser, Web (for Nokia) or Internet services (for Sony Er-
- b. Select a site from your bookmarks or enter directly the web address of the site you want to visit or select More (for Sony Ericsson). You will soon be connected to the Inter-
- c. To end browsing session, go to options and select exit.

11. What sites can I access on my mobile

You can visit wap yahoo.com, www.google.com, mobile.msn.com/wml/ for search and e-mail Needs and www.abs-cbn.com, www.igma.tv for streaming content.

For other sites, check-out the SMART Wapsite at wap.smart.com.ph to see other links.

The need for new reforms in RP telecoms

well planned development strategy and are adequate information and communicascheme.

For example, in the urban centers, broadband access to the Internet is entical to the growth of the area as well as its ability to compete for certain investment opportunities including those that attract foreign investments. In this environment, the quality of the services provided and the confidence, integrity and security of the networks may be the most critical aspects.

On the other hand, in the rural areas, all that may be needed, at a certain time or period, may just be a number of the so-called "Community eCenters" or CeC. What is critica, in this rural environment is the ability to access the internet at a reasonable speed and at an affordable cost.

It is a fact that whatever growth our nation's economy is showing can be attributed mainly to recent progress made in telecommunications more specifically in the unprecedented increase (or should we describe it as an "explosion"?) in the number of mobile telephone subscribers in our country. It must also be recognized that the influx of call centers and the advent of the relatively new field of Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) in the Philippines, Call centers, BPOs and other ICTdriven enterprises are major users of the socalled "digital infrastructure".

The future of the nation's competitiveness in the global markets also relies mainly on the availability of information and communications services, their adequacy and the quality of these services and their costs.

It may even be argued that it is not only the decentralization of progress but, in fact, the progress of the nation and the well-being of its people that are truly dependent on whether the Philippines has available, adequate, and affordable information and communications services in almost the all of the nation whether the area is urban or rural, progressive or not.

The need for a 'Digital infrastruc-

Filipinos must be connected with one another as well as with others in the world and the Philippines must be connected to the rest of the world by its own digital ICT infrastruc-

What the Philippines, an island-nation of more than 7,000 islands, urgently needs now

tions (or "ICT) services that will allow Filipinos as well as foreigners residing in the country who are, at any point in time, in the Philippines to communicate with one another as well as communicate with others who are located in other countries. The fact is that milbons of Filipinos are working abroad as workers or professionals and this alone makes communications a critically required service that is so vital and critical needed by each and every Filipino.

Beyond the traditional communications services i.e. relephone, facsimile, etc. the country also requires an adequate system of transporting data and information transport or data communications.

Today, the Internet is most popular and while not all Filipmos can or have even just it for just once in their lifetime, it is most popular on a nationwide basis. The logical goal is, therefore, is for every Filipino to have right now, or soon, or even just, ultimately, access to the Internet. This will be wherever he or she may be located, at any given time, and at costs that are not only reasonable but, more importantly, affordable. The costs involved in availing information and communications services should be low enough so that even to the most challenged and unprivileged, the poor Pilipinos, wherever they may be, and whether they are in the urban centers of the country or in its rural areas can make use of these services.

In more simple terms, what the Filipinos urgently need today is the ability to be connected to one another i.e. a member of the family, a friend or for business whether he or she is in the Philippines or abroad, anytime, anywhere, and at costs that are not only ressonable but are affordable

Every Filipino, regardless of his or her economic standing in life or social classification in the community, must have the equal opportunity to fully benefit from almost if not all of the good things that an Information Society can and is expected to deliver to a nation and It must, however, he recognized though

that the true state of the digital infrastructure, i.e. what kind of services it can provide, where these services can be availed of, and at what charges that a Filipino will have to pay for, determines to a large extent how its citi-TELECONV F2

SEMENS

Global network of innovation

SIEMENS IS THE MARKET LEADER IN 3G RAN

market researchers at the MultiMedia Research Institute affirm Siemens/NEC's no. 1 market position in the field of 3G/WCDMA: over 30 percent of 3G base stations (NodeBs) used commercially worldwide by mobile providers are from Siemens and NEC (source: Worldwide W-CDMA Cellular Base Station Market Report, Tokyo 2005). On top of this success. Siemens and NEC will continue their 3G success story and partnership in the years to come.

ket is the best evidence of the success of our partnership with NEC. The joint team is doing and excellent work", said Cristoph Caselitz, President of Mobile Networks at Siemens Communications, "90 percent of all 3G mobile customers worldwide are already using W-CDtechnology MA-based Siemens and NEC."

partnership between The Siemens and NEC began over 5 years ago. In November 1999, both companies founded a joint venture to jointly develop and produce in-

IN THEIR LATEST STUDY, THE frastructure technology for third generation mobile communication. Siemens and NEC have collaboratively and successfully established global supply chain management and structure. The companies started supplying their first 3G Node Bs outside Japan in December 2001 and supplied the first commercial service of Hutchison 3G group in the UK and Italy.

Both companies have also greatly contributed to Node B standardization activity in the "Common Public Radio Interface (CPRI)", and intro-"The top position in the 3G mar- duced the world's first CPRI-comphant Node B "NB-88x" senes in November 2004.

"By combining our experience and expertise in the field of 3G five years ago, we were able to develop, produce, and market the new technology much more efficiently right from the start, including a HSDPA (High Speed Downlink Packet Access) endto-end solution, one of the first to be available on the market. This gives us clear advantages as far as market entry and maturity are concerned", said Takakuni Kuki, Executive General Manager of Mobile Network Opera-

rions Unit at NEC.

Against this background, Siemens and NEC are now embarking on the next major steps: the extension of their 3G/WCDMA/HSD-PA solution towards HSUPA(High Speed Uplink Packet Access). Furthermore, the partners are joining forces to push the long-term evolunon of 3G in the respective international bodies.

Siemens Communications is one of the largest players in the global telecommunications industry. Stemens is the only provider in the market that offers its customers a full-range portfolio, from devices for end users to complex network infrastructures for enterprise and carriers as well as related services. Siemens Communications is the world's innovation leader in convergent rechnologies, products and services for wireless, fixed and enterprise networks, it is the largest Group within Siemens and operates in more than 160 countries around the world. In fiscal 2004 (year-end September 30), its 60,000-strong workforce posted sales of approximately 18 billion euros.

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Dude, astig 'yan ah!



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Demon Doys





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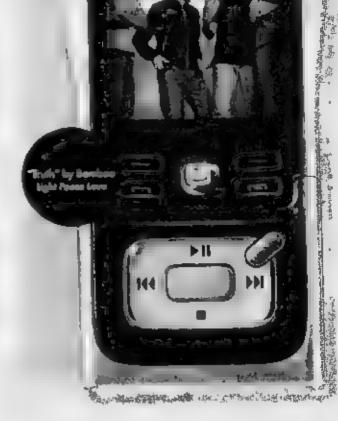
Feels Like Home







Five on the Floor



Other factored artists: Kyla, Urbandub, Frank Smotra, Robbie Williams, Pharell, Nerd, Queen, Moby. All album out in stores newl



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How to salep and brouse on year 3G phone:

SMART 3G The First. The Widest.

World Telecommunication Day

Editor Aries Espinosa

3G with HSDPA: First in Asia-Pacific, a first from Globe Telecom!

FOLLOWING ITS SUCCESSFUL ROLLOUF OF 3G The future for real services including HSDPA or "3.5G", Globe Telecom is now the first telecom company in the Asia-Pacific region and among less than 20 in the world to have launched HSDPA/3.5 G capabilities to customers. This technology boosts the functionality of 3G by allowing faster data transfer speeds and Internet browsing, while still letting subscribers enjoy basic

3G services such as video calls and video streaming. With its launch of Globe Mobile Broadband 3G with HSDPA, Globe is now building the network of the future.

Hi-speed mobile Internet

HSDPA (High Speed Downlink Packet Access, commonly referred to as "3.5G") enables data transfer rates of up to 1.4 Megabits per second (Mbps) with peaks of up to 1.8 Mbps rather than the previous 384 kilobits for 3G. With an HSDPA-data card for example, browsing the Internet on your laptop will be up to 25 times faster than dial-up Internet access. Mobile customers can now use their notebook or mobile phone to surf the Internet at broadband speeds and download large volumes of data such as movies or large e-mail attachments faster than before.

HSDPA technology lays the groundwork for the network of the future as it upgrades the capabilities of 3G. The launch of Globe Mobile Broadband 3G with HSDPA already anticipates that subscribers will demand greater functionality from 3G as the service becomes more pervasive and accessible.

Enhanced mobile experience

With the rapid connection speeds that it delivers, Globe Mobile Broadband 3G with HSD-PA opens up a lot of potential for new applications. Users can easily download full-length music tracks or large video files, and experience video streaming or mobile TV. They can also access exclusive content from various partners, including news reports from ABS-CBN, CNN and GMA.

In addition, Globe prepaid and postpaid subscribers can also avail of 3G basic services such as video calling (which allows the calling parties to see each other on their 3G mobile phones), video sharing (which lets users cape and send video clips to each other), and multimedia streaming.

Limitless possibilities

Subscribers who tried out the Globe Mobile Broadband 3G service when it was introduced earlier this year have already expressed enthusiastic feedback on the rapid web browsing speeds that it enables. Allen Bacallan, director for management information systems of General Milling Corp, shares: "I used my 3G phone as a laptop modem in business meetings. My friends and business partners were impressed by the connection speed." PruLife UK's vice president for information systems Brett Medel agrees: "3G gives me the freedom to download technical updates, check my e-mail, or even watch TV while on the go. Busy people appreciate having services like these that enrich both their professional and personal lives." Even showbiz personality Donita Rose was excited by the potential of the technology. "It's even better than having a broadband connection because you can access information anytime, anywhere,"

With the advent of Globe Mobile Broadband 3G with HSDPA, the possibilities have expanded even more. Globe expects a similarly eager reception from Pinoys, much like the response to the company's earlier innovations like text messaging. MMS over-the-air reloading, and mobile commerce.





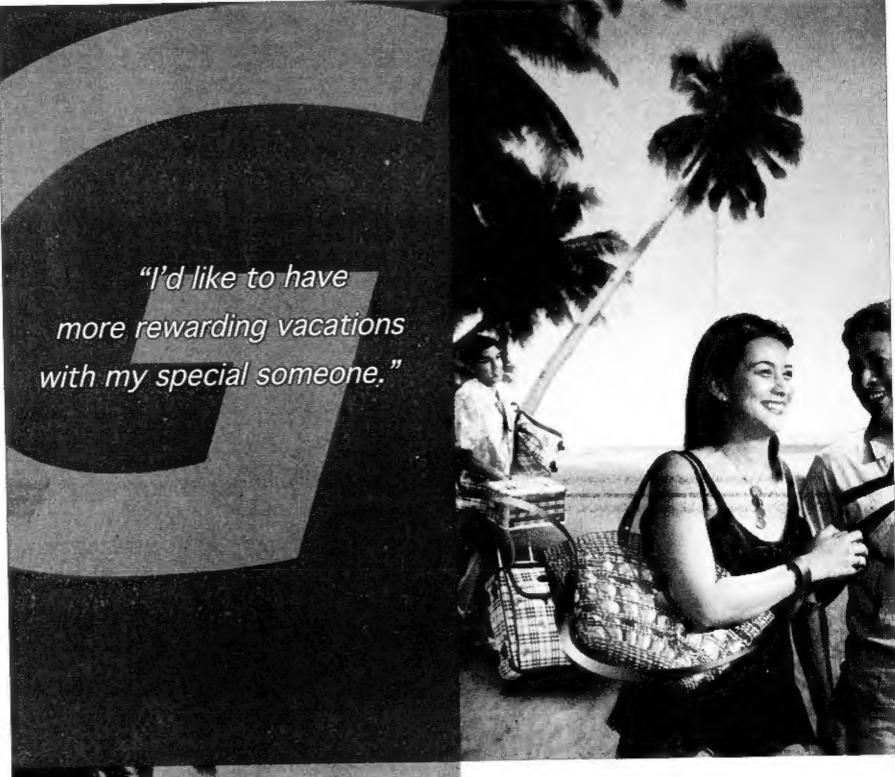


From SMS to MMS and even mobile commerce, Filipinos have easily and eagerly embraced new developments in communications technology brought about by Globe's pioneering moves.

Through Globe Mobile Broadband 3G with HSDPA, Filipinos have the unique privilege of being the first in Asia-Pacific to try out the exciting possibilities of this

new technology. Among other telens in the region, several are also looking into rolling out HSDPA, such as Japan's NTT DoCoMo and Hong Kong's CSL. Apart from Cingular Wireless in the USA and Wataniya Telecom in Kuwait, most HSDPA networks that are already in service are located in Europe. At least 70 other mobile providers worldwide are in the testing or deployment stages, proving the global promise of this revolu-

Globe subscribers can now experience Globe Mobile Broadband 3G with HSDPA at regular 2G rates. Demos are available at selected Globe Business Centers in Metro Manila. The service is available in key cities nationwide, and Globe is continually working to expand its coverage to bring this new service to more Filipinos all over the country and even worldwide.





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Special PROJECT

The need for new reforms in RP telecoms

zens, in the case of the Philippines, Filipinos, as well as other residents of the country can avail of the benefits of the information Society. In fact, the nation may not even be able to bring these benefits to its people in view of the inadequacy, the non-availability and/or the un-affordability of these services.

Defining digital infrastruc-

There appears to be a need to first define and understand, clearly and correctly, what the President refers to as "digital infrastructure". The term "digital" is by its definition may be too broad to fully comprehend and to explain its real meaning. Yet, most would assume that they understand what it means considering the popularity of the word and the frequency of its use. Almost everything around us now is based on digital technology. Most of what is still based on the old analog technology can now be converted to digital.

Infrastructure, on the other hand, is simply defined as the most fundamental or the core of any system of structures.

The Information Society is said to be the successor to the Industrial Society due to the importance of information to almost every person, community and nation today. Information is similar to but is different from Knowledge which is defined as information that has purpose or use. The metaphors associated with the terms information, knowledge, information society and knowledge society are often more con-

fusing than helpful. Digital, is more simple terms, what the Filipinos urgently need today is the ability to be connected to one another i.e. a member of the family, a friend or for business whether he or she is in the Philippines or abroad, anytime, maanywhere, and at costs that are not only reasonable but are af-

PII as the digital infrastructure

At the foundation of this new world order are the digital information networks of the different nations of the world that when interconnected forms what many simply refer to as the "internet", others as the "global information superhighway", or still others, as the Global Information Infrastructure or GII. The global "network of nerworks" is, therefore, composed of what is referred to as the "National Information Infrastructure" or the NII of a particular nation. When it interconnects with another and with more Nils, they they become part of the

This is what President Macapagal-Arroyo must be referring to as our nation's digital infrastruc-

In 1998, before the end of the term of former Philippine President Fidel V. Ramos, the late

Transport and Communications Secretary Arturo Enrile, upon the recommendation of then Undersecretary Josefina Trinidad-Lichauco, authorized the development of what was then termed as the Philippine Information Infrastructure (PII) Policy Study or the "PII PS". The result of this study, undertaken by Canadian and Filipino experts and consultants was supposed to be the PII Policy Development Plan, one that will basically consist of an Agenda and an Action Plan.

The work on the Pli was successfully completed in 1999 but, with the coming in of a new administration, one led by the former Philippine President Joseph Ejercito Estrada, new directions were immediately taken. What is interesting is that during the Estrada administration, one of the few government officials who have openly supported move to progress the PII and advocated for its continued work was the then Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

The PII PS reports as prepared and submitted to the DOTC by the Canadian experts and their Filipino counterparts have been set aside and another set of directions apparently will have to be followed.

Yet, it is clear that principles and the vision and mission as defined in the PII Report of the Filipino consultants to the project are still as relevant now as they were in the late nineties and the early twenties

As we now look beyond 2004 and set our sights on 2010, it is clear that we, as a nation and a people, must continue to aspire to complete the building of our infrastructure digital whether we will call it our Naor the PII or what ever new term that may be selected by those in government now.

Now, the more popular term in use is "Information and Communication Technology," or "ICT". The Pil is, therefore, now may even be referred to as our "ICT Infrastructure"

The recent efforts of the United Nations and its agency, the International Union or ITU revolves mainly around the work of ITU's World Summit on the Information Society or the WISP.

The WISP's Plan of Action, as declared in Geneva in the year 2003, refers to the information and communications infrastructure as the essential foundation for the Information Society. In this paper, the information and communications infrastructure is described as being central in the achievement of the goals of digital inclusion, enabling universal, sustainable, ubiquitous and affordable access to ICT services by all citizens of a nation. The WISPs advises developing nations to take into account relevant solutions already in other developing

countries and countries with economies in transition in order that they can be successful in their respective efforts to provide sustainable connectivity and access to remote and marginalized areas at national and regional

The WISP Plan of Action further asks governments to "take action, in the framework of their national development policies, in order to support an enabling and competitive environment for the necessary investment in ICYT infrastructure and for the development of new services." It also advices governments to devise, within the context of their existing national e-strategies, appropriate universal access policies and strategies and implement them in line with the indicative targets, and develop ICT connectivity indicators.

One of principles enunciated by the WISP in its Plan of Action is for governments to optimized connectivity among major information networks by encouraging the creation and development of ICT backbones and Internet exchange points to reduce interconnection costs and broaden network access.

The PII is the Philippines' national information infrastructure. Future integrated communications in the Philippines. The PII will be based on a nationwide "network of networks", and will allow all Filipinos as well as all residents of the Philippines to take advantage of the country's information, communications, and computing resources. The NII covers and will cover both current and future public and private high-speed, interactive, narrow-band and broadband networks. Communications systems tional Information Infrastructure may be based on satellite, terrestrial, and wireless rechnologies that can and will deliver content and applications to homes, businesses, and other government/public and private institutions. It is the data, information and all other forms of content that flows/travels/moves over the infrastructure whether in the form of databases, the written word, a film, a piece of music, a Telecommunication sound recording, a picture, or computer software. It is the computers, televisions, telephones, radios, and other products that people will employ to access the infrastructure. It is the people who will provide, manage, and generate new information, and those that will help others do the same. It is the individual Filipino who will use and who must benefit from the PII. The PII is a term that encompasses all these components and captures the vision of a nationwide, invisible, seamless, dynamic web of transmission mechanisms, information appliances, content, and people.

Where we are now

We now have digital infrastructure in the Philippines. The

building of this infrastructure is work in progress. This infrastructure is now being built and, in fact, now being operated by the franchised and licensed public telecommunications entities. Major telecoms carriers in the Philippines are PLDT and Smart, Globe Telecom and Innove, Bayantel through its Teliphil and Digitel all have high capacity digital infrastructures utilizing mainly fiber optic, radio microwave and in some remote cases satellite for their transmission. Still mainly on the TDM,

The next move is now towards the new or next generation networks (NGN) and this will require a new wave of capital investments that only the major carriers can afford unless new capital are infused in the minor players.

Promoting investments

The government should continue its present efforts to promote investmUlents particularly from the private sector in order that the development of the physical information and communications networks (the ICT networks) that make up the nation's digital infrastructure, the "network of networks", will have to be both accelerated and rational-

The medium-term goal is for the Philippines, with its more than 7,000 islands, with the progressive development of its digital infrastructure to be fully interconnected and for its people to have connectivity with one an-

Every Filipino must have access to all types of ICT services including high speed/broadband connectivity to the Internet at reasonable and affordable cost that he or she may need as part of his or her daily life. If such type of connectivity is not yet available in a community, the Filipino must, at the least, have access to the Internet at reasonable speeds and at relatively low rates that he or

will be able to provide adequately serve the entire country with ICT services that Filipinos need.

The contact/call center, BPO and other ICT enable business as well as the private business ecommerce initiatives that are now gaining momentum and bringing the nation economic benefits require the accelerated and rational development of the digital infrastructure.

The government must also ensure that the interconnectivity and the interoperability requirements of the major ICT projects of government will also be fully supported by the nation's digital infrastzucture.

The newly-created Commission on Information and Communications Technology (CICT) should not be merely advisory in nature. It is critical that the law converting it into a Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) be passed in the soonest possible time. The CICT/DICT should be the primary policy, planning, coordinating, implementing, regulating and administrative entity of the Executive Branch on ICT and its e-commerce and ep-government initiatives.

The CICT/DICT should take the leadership role in ensure the achievement of our vision of a interconnected, ICT-enabled Philippines; a nation and people truly capable of participaring and competing in and contributing to the global economy.

An integral part of the legislative measure that will create the DICT out of the CICT is the institutional strengthening of what is now known as the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) and making it a truly independent regulatory body for ICT in the Philippines. An entirely new law may, however, be needed for the purpose of really strengthening the NTC.

The reorganized and strengthened NTC should, in turn, take the lead in ensuring that new ICT

We now have digital infrastructure in the Philippines. The building of this infrastructure is work in progress. This infrastructure is now being built and, in fact, now being operated by the franchised and licensed public telecommunications entities

she can afford.

The government must continue to work closely and in real partnership with the private sector in order that telecommunications facilities and other resources including but not limited to cellular mobile telephony cell

services such as 1P Telephony/VoIP as well as others particularly those based on new emerging technologies are provided adequately in our country. Issues on competition and on the rights of existing as well new players in a liberalized regulatory environ-

sites so that the telecoms carriers ment should be addressed and resolved on a timely basis with the goal of ensuring the availability of ICT services that our people need and also in order that the cost of communications and of moving information/knowledge from one point of the country to another as well as to and from abroad will be significantly reduced. This should bring immense economic as well as personal benefits to overseas Filipino workers and their families

The Next Steps

The next steps should start with a redefinition of the respective Roles of Government, the Private Sector and the Civil Society in the development of our narion's "Digital infrastructure", or the Philippines Information and Communications Infrastructure, our digital highway of highways or network of networks.

There should be no change in the present system where the private sector is the engine for development. Investments come from the private sector carriers

The government should not invest in digital infrastructure and, in fact, even investments in projects which will be privatized later should not be allowed.

Government should focus on the areas where the private sector does not go or will not go simply because the economy of the area is just not adequate to support the new facilities built. It should go only if there are takers at all. Given the lack of government capital to lend to these entrepreneurs among our countrymen, it is proposed that a new system of working with the private sector, possibly not the major carriers, but others, will be made possible.

Some kind of a new and more commercial, definitely, more creating way of doing "business franchising" should be devel-

This and the other next steps are going to be focus issues in our next paper as we continue to advocate the need for a new wave of telecoms reforms and for the crafting of a new road map towards the immediate goal of crafting a new Road Map, considering the more recent changes in technology and in almost other aspects of our lives. This road map must lead us all to a seamlessly interconnected, universally and fully accessible even from remote areas of our country and driven by truly digital new generation networks and systems. We cannot afford to be left behind any further as even now we are already seriously lagging behind communications networks and all the associated software, hardware, middleware and all other computing resources that support interaction and communications among the citizens and residents of the nation and among its societies, communities and organizations whether their orientation is business, civil society or government.

A company all Filipinos can be truly proud of: Globe Telecom

'In all that we do, Globe Telecom has always been about

giving Filipinos what they want and providing what they need'

n just one sentence, Globe Telecom's president and CEO, L Gerardo C Ablaza Jr., was able to sum up the corporate philosophy of a highly successful, so well admired, and highly respected telecommunications/ICT major enterprise. A company all Filipinos can be truly proud of: Globe

Ablaza says that Globe Telecom as a corporate entity wrote its first vision, mission and values (VMV) statement anchored on the proposition that it will provide more just lines but solutions to customers' communications-based needs. Since that time, Globe has come into its own as a force that not long provides communications solutions but breakthrough services that change the way people do things.

Last year, 2005, Globe defined for itself a new VMV statement that reflects this mission to transform and enrich people's lives through communications and its vision to make great thighs possible for every Filipino. This new statement cascaded through the organization has now has reinvigorated the company's competitive spirit, serving as is its battle cry as the company ventures into exciting new territories while continuing to



SHOWN are: Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala II, chairman of the board; Lim Chuan Poh, co-vice chairman; Delfin Lazaro, co-vice chairman.

build on past successes. Their new battle cry now

is: Sa Globe, Posible. With a deeper customer understanding, a clearly defined strategies, and an organization that shares a passion for excellence and continuous growth Globe Telecom is one that is moving ahead

with full confidence in its own resources particularly its own people. Globe is fully confident that in the years ahead it will be able to successfully harness innovations in communication technology to provide more relevant products and services that are able to transform and enrich peoples' lives.



Special Project

iTeach iCare shows employee volunteerism at its best

joined the recent gathering of A service providers of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), where one of the company's corporate social responsibility (CSR) projects - iTeach iCare - was put on

iTeach iCare, which stands for information technology and innove Communications, involves employees of the company taking time out from work to teach public high school students various computer applications as well as the importance of the Internet to access valuable information.

Launched in September last year, iTeach

nnove Communications Inc iCare is being implemented in public high schools where Innove also provided Internet connectivity, in keeping with the company's thrust of helping in the development of the Filipino youth through ICT ed-

> iTeach iCare not only benefits the students but also the employee volunteers of Innove as they go about sharing their knowledge and skills to the students and participating in the company's CSR programs with enthusiasm and a sense of achievement and pride.

> The event, led by ADB's Office of Administration Services (OAS) and themed 'OAS and Its Service Providers: Towards A Socially Responsible Partnership', brought together the institution's service providers to

demonstrate the various efforts being done by private companies in the development of the Philippines.

Aside from Innove and its iTeach iCare program, also exhibited were the CSR projects of Figaro Foundation Corp., Hewlett-Packard Philippines, HMR Philippines, Eastern Telecom, TNT, and First Balfor,

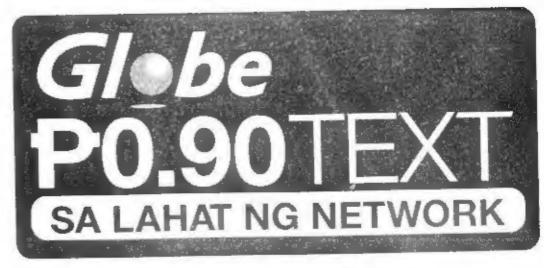
ADB, based in Manila, is dedicated to reducing poverty in the Asia and Pacific region through pro-poor sustainable economic growth, social development, and good governance. Established in 1966, it is owned by 64 members - 46 from the region. In 2004, it approved loans and technical assistance totaling \$5.3 billion and \$196.6 million, respectively.



SHOWN are (from left): Carlo Estonina of Globe QUEST Sales, ADB Office of Administrative Services Principal Director Robert Dawson and Innove Corporate Social Responsibility OIC Ailan Cuevas.







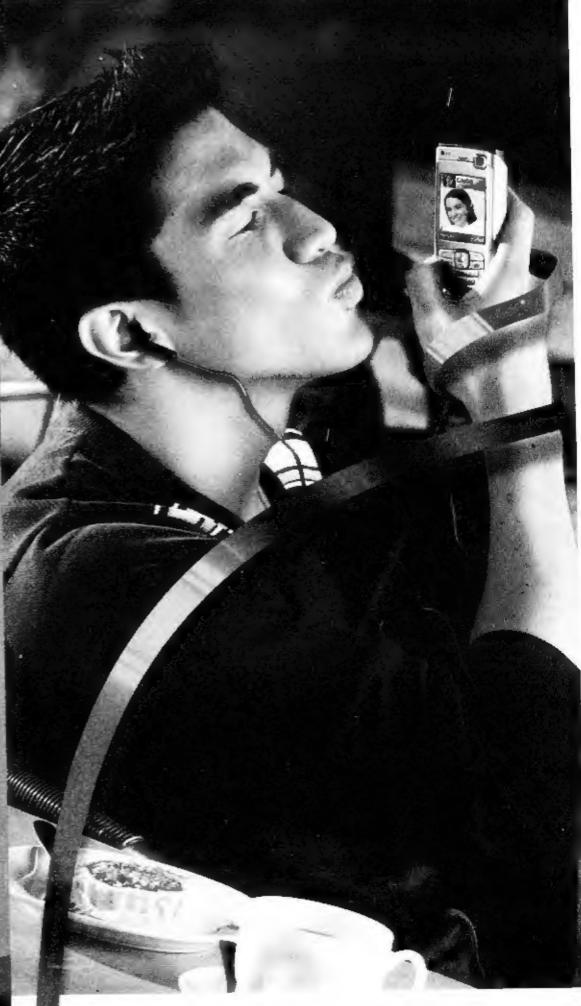
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